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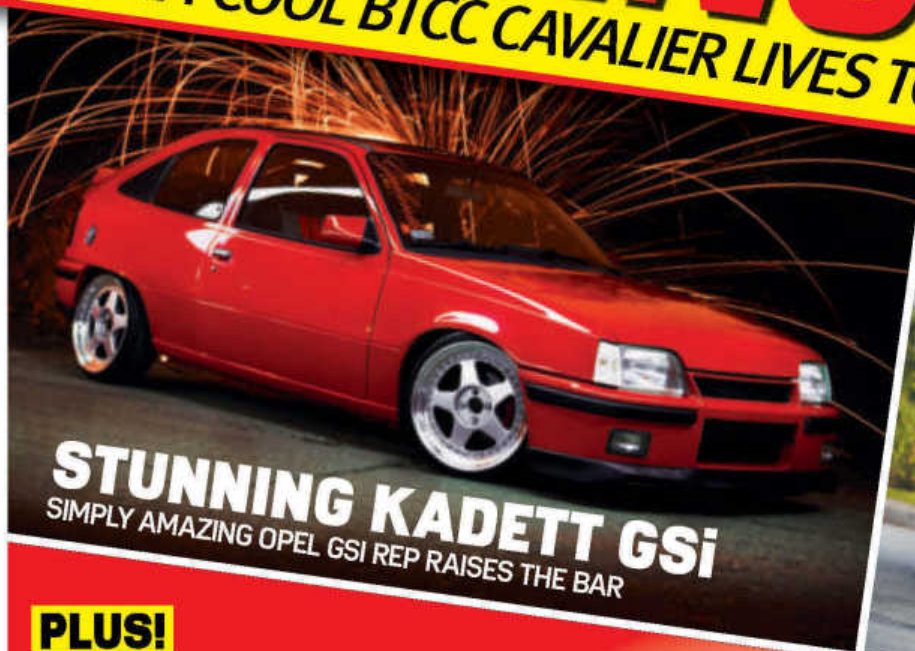
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PERFORMANCE

VAUXHALL



SURPRISE PACKAGE

We start off the issue with the most excellent news that the date for the Performance Vauxhall Show has been announced. 12 June is the date, and it's going to be a big one!

But that's obviously months away, so in the meantime you'll have to get your Griffin fix elsewhere – and where better than this very magazine! We've got a top mix of cars in this issue, from the last ever BTCC Cavalier (how cool!) to a Kadett GSI rep that literally had Jarkle drooling over his keyboard.

We often know about potential feature cars long before they happen – such is the nature of forums and social media – cars like Ian Waterfield's 500bhp Zafira (page 92) and Dave Hughes immaculate Vectra (page 40) but occasionally cars just turn up out-of-the-blue, cars that have been completely off our radar

appear and surprise us all. One such car is the RWD Astra sleeper (page 84) belonging to Andy Griggs. It's a lovely example of the rare Mk1, but with an awesome secret hidden within.

Slightly less surprising, but no less impressive is the Oschersleben Opel Treffen show report – Every year our roving reporter Steve McCann sets off in search of the German madness, and we had the task of whittling down hundreds of images to give you a taste of what the event is all about. Go and have a look for yourself on page 28, and if you like what you see, why not make it your mission to head over there yourself in 2016?

That's enough from me, I really hope you enjoy the mag!

Don

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VAUXHALL**
SEE PAGE 120
FOR DETAILS

MEET THE TEAM

The people who bring you *Performance Vauxhall*, and what we've been up to this month...



DAN WHITE
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Wondering where 2015 went, it's nearly next year already!
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In headless chicken mode, trying to organise a house move!
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JAMIE ARKLE
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Finally getting round to visiting the Carlton. Progress will resume.
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DAN FURR
CONTRIBUTOR
Still awestruck after spending a day playing with the last BTCC Cavalier ever made!



DAVE REID
CONTRIBUTOR
Sold my T5-R so I can finally crack on with the Turbo. Shit just got serious!

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE: 15 JANUARY 2016

PERFORMANCE VAUXHALL CONTENTS

DEC/JAN 2016

this month

08 BTCC CAVALIER

Genuine RML Cav gets a new lease of life and dominates on track.

20 KADETT GSi REP

Simply stunning Kadett with the full GSi treatment and much more.

28 OPEL TREFFEN

Our annual visit to what must be the most mental GM show on Earth!

40 VECTRA VXR

Utterly immaculate big power Vectra has us drooling.

48 READER RESTO

Take one Manta, leave it sitting for several years – then restore it!

52 DRAG CORSA A

Purpose built, single minded drag weapon is something else.

70 ASTRA VXR NUR

One man's mission to make his ideal Astra Nurburgring VXR.

78 ROLLING ROAD

Courtenay Sport is the venue for this issue's dyno shootout.

84 RWD ASTRA

Properly cool Mk1 Astra with a RWD sting in its tail.

92 ZAFIRA VXR

With a claimed 500bhp, this is one monster people carrier!



08 BTCC CAV



20 KADETT



28 TREFFEN



84 RWD MK1

every month

16 NEWS

The latest news from the Vauxhall and Opel scene, right here!

18 GEAR

Our guide to the latest Vauxhall-related products hitting the shops.

60 EXPERT

This issue we ask an industry expert about wheels.

64 HALL OF FAME

Got a cool Vauxhall? Send us some pics and it could end up here.

102 BUYING GUIDE

Buying, owning and tuning the Mk2 Astra GTE 16V.

120 SUBSCRIBE

Never miss another issue again.

122 FACEBOOK CARS

The best Vauxhalls from our FB page.

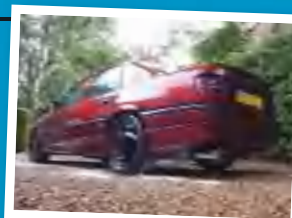
98 TECH GUIDE

The winner of our recent Eibach competition



112 Q&A

Your technical questions answered by our experts



116 STAFF CARS

All the goings on from inside the Performance Vauxhall workshop

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BACK TO THE FUTURE

Lotus Carlton owner, Tony Absolom, is lucky enough to be in possession of not one, but two legendary Vauxhalls thanks to his decision to buy and race the last-ever BTCC Cavalier...

WORDS Dan Furr PHOTOS Dan Sherwood

Rockingham Motor Speedway, Northamptonshire, September 2015. We're standing on the main grandstand of Europe's fastest racing circuit watching one of the most important rounds of the British Touring Car Championship unfold before our eyes. Crucial points that will make or break the title race for any one of a number of star drivers are at stake, but in spite of this nail-biting, televised motorsport spectacle, we find ourselves distracted by frantic movement around the nearby pit lane.

There, patiently awaiting the end of Plato, Neal and Shedden's scrap on the asphalt, racing legend, John Cleland, is readying his ex-BTCC Vectra B for the Historic Sports Car Club's Super Touring Car Challenge support race.

Regular readers will recall Cleland's extraordinary motor from its starring role in the December 2013 edition of *Performance Vauxhall*, but his isn't the only old-school Griffin that we watch take to Rockingham's hallowed ground during our Autumn outing. In fact, the Mk3 Cavalier Super Tourer that we're referring to seems to have generated a greater level of excitement than the Vectra, perhaps because it is a car even more closely associated with John's emphatic 1995 BTCC title win than the one we see him climbing into.

SUPPORT VEHICLE

"This particular Cavalier was the test and support vehicle used by Cleland during that all-important championship-winning year," explains the now Fujifilm-liveried





FAST FACTS

- ★ Genuine BTCC Mk3 Cavalier
- ★ Reverse-head Swindon XE
- ★ Xtrac six-speed sequential gearbox
- ★ Twin four-pot AP Racing front anchors
- ★ 19in Dymag magnesium wheels

BTCC CAVALIER



RML were responsible for building all the BTCC Cavaliers



Airjacks are accessed via a neat port hidden behind the grille badge

Mk3's current owner, Tony Absolom. "Three Cavaliers were produced by Ray Mallock's race car preparation outfit, RML, for the 1995 BTCC season, and mine was the last of the trio to be built. That simple fact makes it the final touring car Cav," he adds.

SPECIAL EDITIONS

To be in possession of such an amazing Vauxhall suggests something of a love for the brand, and we're not entirely surprised to find a Lotus Carlton (no. 148 in case you're interested) sitting in Tony's Binfield Heath workshop when we visit him in order to take a closer look at his achingly cool Cavalier. "I bought the special edition Carlton when it was just four years old. I wanted one as soon as the model was released, and I literally cried tears of



Reverse head Swindon engine is a masterpiece and swaps the position of the inlet and exhaust manifolds

“I REALISED EARLY ON THAT YOU HAVE TO DRIVE THE CAR FLAT OUT AT ALL TIMES IN ORDER TO GET THE BEST OUT OF IT.”

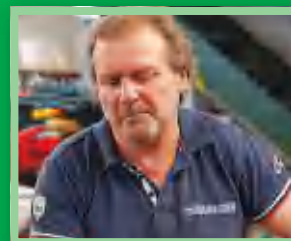
joy when I drove the car home for the first time,” he smiles. His desire to buy a Cavalier many years later, however, wasn't quite so earth-shattering. “I was looking for a motor to go racing in, and the Mk3 that I ended up buying just happened to present itself at the right time for the right price,” he admits. Fair enough!

Designated the catchy moniker, ‘Chassis 032’, Tony's Cavalier made its live racing debut in the 1995 FIA Touring Car World Cup where it was

driven by Anthony Reid under the Opel Team Japan banner. From there, it was acquired by family-run, independent racing team, Mint Motorsport, who returned the car to British shores for the 1996 and 1997 BTCC seasons (where it found itself pitched against the works Vectras of Cleland and co.) before competing with it in the RAC Tourist Trophy.

The BTCC is famous for its ‘win on Sunday, drive on Monday’ motto, which makes the Cavalier's success in '95 all

the more interesting: here was the oldest tin on the grid making mincemeat of the much newer chariots that it was battling for championship points, yet Vauxhall had stopped selling the production model to Joe Public in favour of its Vectra B offering! Nevertheless, the Mk3 was a force to be reckoned with at the track, a matter unequivocally proven by the efforts of Cleland and his then-teammate, James Thompson, in their exciting fight for silverware.



OWNER TONY ABSOLOM

AGE 56

JOB Director of Automotive Solutions Race Car Engineering
FAVOURITE VAUXHALL Lotus Carlton

BEST THING ABOUT THE CAR Its 'reverse head' XE

WHAT'S NEXT? A rebuild during the winter in advance of another season of racing

BTCC CAVALIER



Following its retirement from top-flight motorsport events, Tony's car was raced by Nigel Bowen in various Formula Saloon races until 2004 whereupon it was mothballed. Five years passed with the car becoming nothing more than a dust magnet, but the classic Vauxhall's bright future was secured in the summer of 2009 when Super Touring Car Trophy organiser, Jonny Westbrook, added it to his personal collection of racing cars.

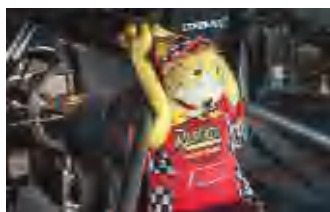
PRETTY AS A PICTURE

"Jonny carried out a bare metal restoration that saw the Cavalier return to active duty in the 2012 Fujifilm Touring Car Trophy series," continues Tony. "Iconic 1996 Fujifilm racing livery was expertly recreated and applied to the refreshed shell before its release from storage, while the car's chassis and powertrain were given a makeover to ensure RML BTCC-spec originality," he says.

When Jonny needed to raise funds in the early part of 2014, the top-notch Vauxhall was advertised for sale. "After impressive performances in the Fujifilm events at Silverstone in 2012, the car went on to make two standout



Crazy ride height and huge wheels pushed the boundaries of what was allowed in the BTCC regs



appearances in the 2013 Super Touring Car Trophy series before I discovered that it was available for purchase. I'd been on the lookout for a new motor following two decades spent hammering a 306bhp Mk2 VW Golf

around various racing circuits at home and abroad, and the idea of a genuine works Cavalier appealed to me, not least of all because of this particular car's association with Cleland's title win," reveals Tony.

As anybody buying a classic racer will tell you, specialist tooling and spare parts are essential when attempting to keep an old track-demon alive, especially when the vehicle in question was produced during the height of the BTCC's popularity in the mid 1990s. "My Cavalier cost over £300k to build in 1995, with every part

of the car subjected to Ray Mallock's secret sorcery!" cries Tony. "Everything from the uprights to the fuel system is entirely bespoke, and virtually every part requires custom equipment made by RML 'in period' to ensure smooth operation without issue. Thankfully, Jonny gave me a truckload of must-have gear!" he beams.

That bounty included a selection of Dymag centre-lock magnesium nineteen inchers – rims that aren't easily bought today. When eyeballing the current crop of BTCC racing cars, it's easy to see why that





“MY CAVALIER COST OVER
£300K TO BUILD IN 1995”

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

Swindon Engines reverse head C20XE 045S, billet crankshaft, twin-ring forged pistons, 82x88mm bore stroke, 12.5:1 compression ratio, forged connecting rods, custom profile camshafts, 13.5mm valve lift, solid lifters, 5mm valve stems, 2mm oversized inlet and exhaust valves, direct-to-head roller barrel throttle bodies in carbon-fibre housing, cold air feed, tubular exhaust manifold, straight-through centre-exit large bore stainless steel exhaust system, dry sump oil system, Weber Alpha standalone management (ECU located in passenger foot well), wasted spark ignition, carbon-fibre encased bagged fuel cell with centre exhaust tunnel, polished fluid reservoirs, engine bay painted gunmetal grey

POWER

300bhp (310bhp in period), 320lb/ft torque, 0-60mph in under 4 seconds, overall weight: 970kg

TRANSMISSION

Front-wheel drive, Xtrac six-speed sequential straight-cut dog engagement racing gearbox, pressure fed internals, internal oil pump, dedicated external oil cooler, plated differential

SUSPENSION

RML-engineered McPherson struts with custom springs, Dynamic adjustable dampers with remote reservoirs, RML wishbones and anti-roll bar, semi-trailing rear arms

BRAKES

Twin AP Racing four-piston front calipers with 355mm two-piece drilled discs, Brembo 266mm rear discs, Brembo racing pads, water cooling system, steel brake lines throughout

WHEELS & TYRES

8.2x19in Dymag centre-lock magnesium multi-spokes painted white, Hoosier racing slick soft and medium compounds for dry track conditions, cut slick for the wet, 210/65x19 tyre profiles

BODY

1995 Mk3 Cavalier BTCC Super Touring car, RML chassis 032, FIA homologated body shell, fully seam welded, custom wide arch front wings, rolled rear wheel arches, air jacks, trimmed Mk3 Cavalier LS front bumper, BTCC front splitter and bumper extensions, RML bonnet stay painted orange, front and rear tow eyes painted orange, RML clear Perspex headlamp covers, single windscreen wiper conversion, air jack connector valve located behind front grille Griffin badge, Alpine sunstrip, Aerocatches, Mk3 Cavalier Turbo 4x4 boot panel and

door bump strips, smoked rear light clusters, Mk3 Cavalier LS rear bumper with centre-exit exhaust aperture and heat shield, TOCA-approved carbon-fibre rear wing, boot release button blanking plate, 1996 Mint Motorsport Fujifilm BTCC livery, Gerry Marshall tribute printed on nearside passenger window

INTERIOR

Gunmetal grey paintwork, Corbeau personalised racing bucket seat, Luke safety harnesses, RML T45 lightweight tubed weld-in multi-point roll cage and chassis strengthening, Personal three-spoke steering wheel with snap-off boss, carbon-fibre door cards and floor panels, carbon-fibre foot rest and custom switch panel, custom pedal box with brake bias adjuster, PI dash panel with digital data logging, carbon-fibre dash and air vent blanking plates, GoPro camera mounted to roll cage

ICE

Do behave!

THANKS

Paul Kendall, Lee 'Data' Hopkinson, Peter 'The Polisher' Simpson, and to Jonny Westbrook for selling the car to me (and for his advice with regard to running the old girl!).



Seating position is pure race car, and is far removed from the road car

BTCC CAVALIER



Oh to have not only this Cav, but also such a fully stocked workshop!

might be the case; the Cavalier's wheel arches have been chopped and rolled (with outwardly extended arch flares at the front) to enable the massive monoblocks to sit deep inside the car's chassis. Compare that to the setup found on today's BTCC upstarts – smaller wheels with arch gaps big enough to house a Meriva!

BACK TO FRONT

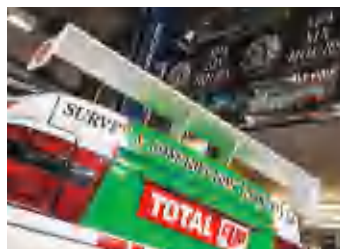
Sadly, eleven of the twelve wheels needed to be fixed due to damage inflicted upon them at the track. Tony added the required remedial work to a long 'to do' list that included a full strip and rebuild of every mechanical component on the car. He also became friendly with the guys at Swindon Racing Engines – the firm responsible for the supply and build of the 'reverse head' dry-sumped BTCC C20XE that powers his ride. "A 'Red Top' lump's exhaust manifold ordinarily sits at the front, meaning that under-bonnet heat is blown towards the intake system at the rear. Swapping airflow pipework around makes perfect sense, but there's a lot more to it than just rotating the car's cylinder head," he stresses.

He's not wrong; Swindon completely reworked the XE's head, with an uprated valvetrain, solid lifters and high-lift camshafts making an appearance atop a modified block containing forged internals. Direct-to-head roller barrel throttle bodies (enclosed in a carbon-fibre housing in the case of Tony's car) and a centre exit-exhaust system that travels through the middle of a carbon-fibre encased fuel bag also work in

conjunction with one another in a bid to help vintage Weber Alpha management deliver 310bhp.

Getting to grips with this immense naturally aspirated power proved tricky when Tony took on experienced rivals in the 2014 Super Touring Car Championship. "I realised early on that you have to drive the car flat out at all times in order to get the best out of it. Anything less and it handles like a dog, but put your foot down and those ponies provide you with one hell of a ride!" he laughs.

A steady stream of constantly-improving race results (against competitors including John Cleland) in the 2015 Super Touring Challenge confirm our assumption that the blistering performance that Tony pulled out of the bag when seen hunting down Hondas at Rockingham is just the start of this BTCC Cavalier's new lease of life. The fact that there is a series dedicated to bringing back the thrills and spills of the golden era of Super Tourers is something that we should all be thankful for, and we can't wait to see what this mega Mk3 is capable of achieving during 2016. Gentlemen, start your engines! ○



It's shots like this that make you realise just how bespoke the RML cars were



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PVS 2016 DATE ANNOUNCED

GET YOUR DIARIES OUT AS THE DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR THE BIGGEST VAUXHALL/OPEL EVENT OF THE YEAR...



The date for the Performance Vauxhall Show 2016 has been announced! Get Sunday 12th June in your diaries (or the 11th too if you're planning to camp and make a weekend of it!) If you've been before you'll know what to expect – thousands of club cars, fantastic drag strip action, loads of traders offering deals, and some amazing show features. If you've not been before, make 2016 your first – We guarantee it won't be your last!

Public Advance Weekend tickets are £25 (includes entry to the show on Sunday, and camping on the Saturday night) or £18 in advance for show entrance on Sunday. These represent great value for money, and a big saving over buying tickets on the gate – So don't delay – book today!

The drag strip will be open on Saturday and Sunday and the cost will be £20 for four runs.

We strongly advise ALL clubs to book as soon as possible. There is a finite amount of space at Santa Pod, and once all the places have gone – there are no more. We have had to regrettably turn clubs away in previous years due to them booking too late. There will be a date announced in due course when all bookings must be received by, but please note that if the club spaces are filled before this date, then you will still miss out, so get your club organised early!

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NEWS > SHORTS

*SUPER TOURING

The all-new Astra Sports Tourer will be in showrooms in March and Vauxhall have announced that the model will cost from £16,585 on-the-road. The new Sports Tourer range includes Design, Tech Line, SRi and Elite, with Nav versions of the SRi and Elite trims also available. The range-topping (200PS) 1.6-litre is available in SRi trim priced from £21,710 on-the-road.





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CAVS ON THE WEB

Looking for online info on the Mk3 Cav? Look no further...

► The Mk3 Cavalier Owners Club (formerly known as 'CavMk3OC') has recently launched its new online home. Featuring maintenance guides, model tech specs, event information and detailed project threads, the club's fully responsive website brings

together owners of all variants of one of Vauxhall's best-loved models (from the humble, pre-facelift 1.4-litre 'standard' to the mighty Turbo 4x4) as well as catering for Opel and Holden Vectra A enthusiasts. Magazine articles starring cars owned by the club's members

are featured prominently, and fresh content is being uploaded daily with a view to making the website the definitive resource for anyone taking an interest in Mk3 Cavaliers. Membership is free. Go check it out and sign up at www.vauxhallcavalier.com

FLAMING ZAFIRAS

► Vauxhall have been in contact with Zafira owners across Britain after over 100 owners have reported overheating problems which have resulted in fires! The issue appears to affect components behind the glovebox and is believed to be caused by the heating and ventilation system. Vauxhall have written to 220,000 owners and have released a statement which includes – "The safety of our customers is the number one priority. Our investigations have found that a number of incidents have occurred due to previous repairs being performed improperly or using certain non-genuine parts."

The issue appears to affect the Zafira B and all cars so far affected have been right-hand drive, built between 2005 and 2014 and crucially fitted with manual air-conditioning, as opposed to the electronic climate control. If you have any concerns visit www.vauxhall.co.uk/zafiracustomeradvice.html



The VBOA event features a huge range of GM goodness

VBOA DATE SWAP

► Due to an unavoidable date clash with the British Grand Prix (cheers Bernie!) the organisers of the VBOA National Rally at Billing have taken the wise decision to move the event to the following weekend. So get July 15, 16 and 17th in your diaries.

The VBOA would like to apologise

to anyone who has already booked accommodation, but with plenty of notice we've no doubt hotels will be happy to alter bookings. Spread the word to anyone you know who has booked – and for up to date information and for further details on the event please go to www.vboa.org.uk.

*SCRAP IT

Vauxhall have re-launched its Scrappage Allowance scheme, which means customers can take advantage of a £2,000 scrappage trade-in against most new passenger cars. As an example a 21-year old participating in the scheme, could receive £1,190 finance deposit contribution and pay £193 per month over 36 months for a Corsa 1.2-litre Limited Edition, including one year's free insurance.



*SMELLY ASTRA

The new Astra can be specified with an 'AirWellness' fragrance diffuser with a choice of either Dark Wood or Green Tea scents. The aroma system can easily be mounted on the centre console with the PowerFlex adaptor and filled with the scent pads. The new system is available for £40 and the scent pads can be purchased in sets of four for £10.



GEAR

More great products and deals that we've tracked down for you.



EIBACH GOODIES

If you've got an Astra Mk4 with tired suspension then it may be worth seeing what Eibach have to offer. With both the Pro-Kit and Sportline available, owners have the luxury of deciding whether to go for the subtle 30mm drop all round, or the 45-50mm drop offered by the Sportline kit. Pro-Spacers are also available to add the finishing touch, and are available in 5mm up to 25mm per side.

We've also just heard that camber bolt sets are now available for the Astra Mk6 GTC. The bolts offer +/-2.00° of adjustment and are specifically developed for the GTC's HiPer strut set-up. The kit consists of four bolts – two cam bolts (one per side) for the slotted upper hole, and two standard replacement bolts for the lower hole (again one per side).

PRICE MK4 PRO KIT AND SPORTLINE KIT BOTH £155

MK4 PRO SPACERS £48 PER AXLE

MK6 CAMBER BOLTS £38

CONTACT WWW.EIBACH.COM OR CALL 01455 285851



DODO JUICE FRAGRANCES

Car care manufacturers Dodo Juice have won numerous awards for the performance of their range, and one of the most notable things associated with their products is that they always smell bloody lovely! Now, due to demand from customers, eleven of the Dodo Juice fragrances are available to buy as specific air fresheners. Available in 100ml pump sprays for superior dosage and economy over traditional infused card air fresheners, this new selection includes all eight of Dodo Juice's 'core wax range' along with three extra fragrances from some of their most popular detailing products. Spray into air vents, onto headlining, under seats, or wherever you want to neutralise unpleasant odours and provide a long-lasting scent.

PRICE £3.95 EACH **CONTACT** WWW.DODOJUICE.COM



POWERFLEX BUSHES

The latest addition to the extensive Powerflex range of bushes is for the Corsa C. You can now get a pair of wishbone front bushes to complement the existing bush that fits into the rear position of the same wishbone. Plus – for vehicles used in motorsport or predominantly on track this new bush is also available in the stiffer Powerflex Black Series range.

PRICE £28 EACH

CONTACT WWW.POWERFLEX.CO.UK



TESTED

TESTED BY MIDGE

AUTO FINESSE GLISTEN SPRAY WAX

PRICE £11.95 (500ml)

There are many products on the market that claim to make life easy in the show and shine department, some are great, others are, well, a bit crap. Traditionally hard waxes are good for protection but require serious effort, quick detailers are just the job for light cleaning but don't offer any great protection so, come show time, you're probably looking to break out the spray wax.

The trouble is spray waxes can be a bit hit and miss. Just to make a wax mist effectively isn't easy, and that's why plenty simply don't work that well. At the most many are designed as a 'booster wax' to help keep the performance of a previously applied hard wax or sealant.

So what's different about this Glisten? Auto Finesse claim that, although it makes an exceedingly good booster, it can also be used as a great, quick, stand-alone product. Most importantly though they say it's about the



easiest to use spray out there with the best result. That's got to be worth a look.

TESTED

For a spray-on wax that's packed with protective polymers it smells unusually good when you crack it open, and that's something that Auto Finesse always do well. These polymers along with the rest of the formula are what help it go on as a liquid rather than a more conventional hard-paste. They also make this product suitable for use on both matt paint and vinyl wraps, which is a rarity to say the least.

Most hard waxes come

in small tubs of 250ml (or less) and start at around 30 quid. Here you get 500ml of a premium product for under £12 so you may be thinking you have to use half a bottle each time to get for the desired effect. You don't.

The key thing to remember is a little goes along way. People make the mistake of whacking on loads of product, essentially all they're doing is wiping most of the wax off with the microfibre. With Glisten a light mist will do, followed by a quick wipe to spread it around, a light buff and, er, that's about it.

The first thing you notice is that there's

hardly any residue and the buffing-off requires next-to no elbow grease. I like that, a lot. What's more this product can be layered, which is equally unusual for any spray-based formula.

VERDICT

The fact of the matter is this stuff has the performance to put the majority of brands to shame. That's a crucial point too because being quick and easy to use is one thing, but it's all for nothing if you don't get the end result you desire. There's no such problem here, with hardly any effort you'll achieve super-smooth, slick paint with crisp bright reflections, a deep rich gloss and some serious water beading. Try it for yourself and you'll see it makes the paint feel like glass, which isn't an easy trick to pull off without putting in loads of effort. It's incredibly quick to apply, and value wise it's right up there. The



standard 500ml bottle should last you up to 20 washes on an average sized car, if you don't get at least 10 you're using way too much. Protection wise Auto Finesse say that you'll get 3-6 weeks which is perfect if you clean your car on the regular. While it's true there are hard waxes and sealants that last longer, they require loads more application effort, and that kind of defeats the object.

IN A NUTSHELL: Easy, quick and easy. Love it!

ARP 12-POINT NUT KITS

If you're embarking on, or are part way through a restoration then it's likely you'll need some new fixings. If so check out these 12-point nut kits from ARP. Available in 31 metric fitments, in a choice of chrome moly steel, black oxide finish, or stainless steel. They could be the finishing touches to your build!

CONTACT WWW.ARP-BOLTS.COM



GAZ TOP MOUNTS

It's always great news when new products are announced for 'old' models, and here are some new products from GAZ - They've developed and released a fixed top mount for the Mk4 Astra intended for race use, and an adjustable eccentric one for the Nova. Speak to GAZ for more information.

PRICE ASTRA £132 PER PAIR, NOVA £144 PER PAIR

KADETT E



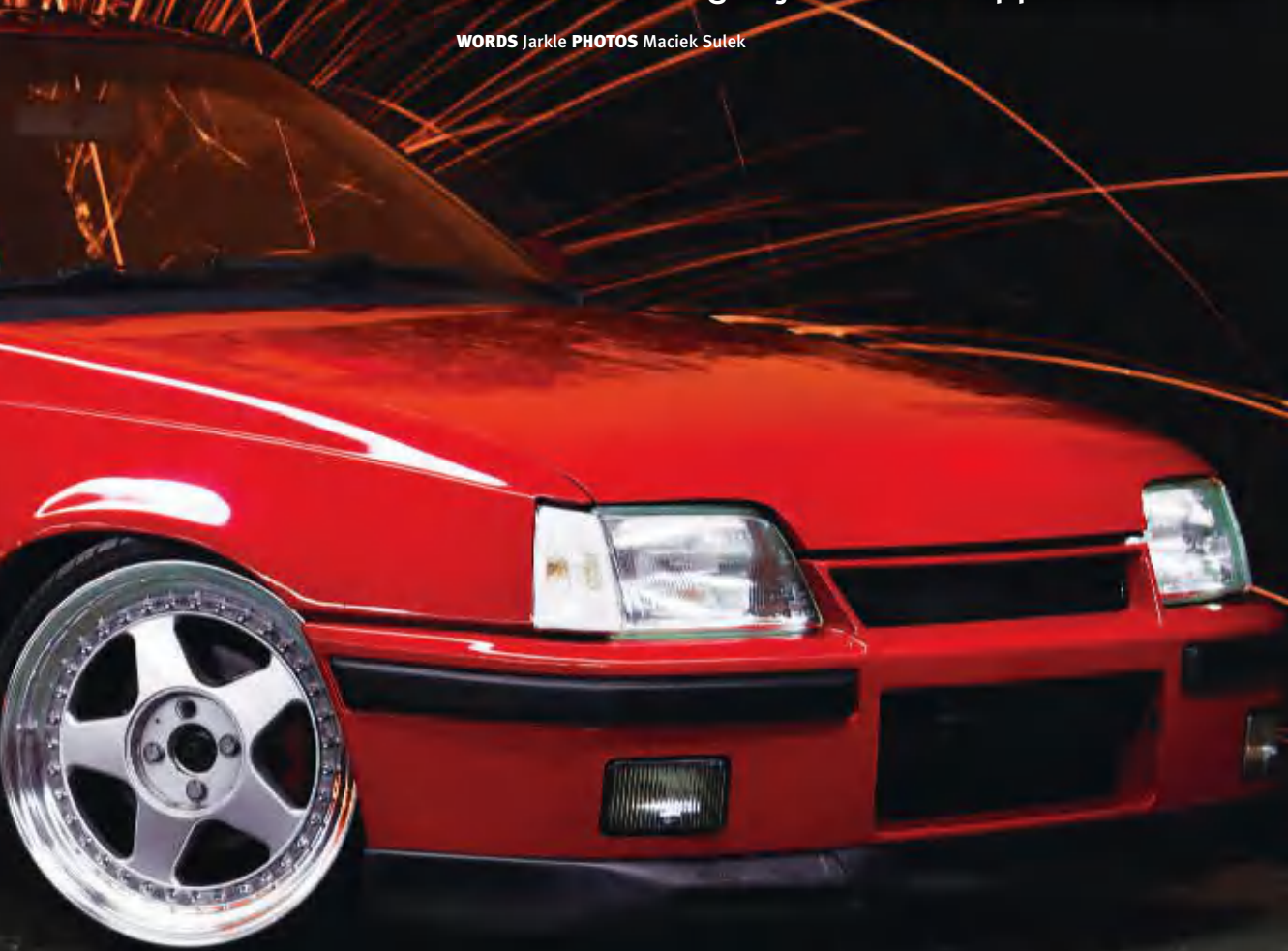
FAST FACTS

- ★ One-off Kadett E GSi replica with OPC
- ★ Power Red paint
- ★ Custom coilovers and lowering springs
- ★ 8x17in OZ Futura alloys re-drilled to 4x108pcd
- ★ Rebuilt C20XE and F18 transmission
- ★ Re-trimmed Sparco bucket seats

RED ALERT

We've featured our share of beautifully built Mk2 Astras over the years but this Polish Kadett GSi might just have topped them all

WORDS Jarkle PHOTOS Maciek Sulek



KADETT E

Anyone who knows me will already be well aware that my love for cars is at its strongest when it's focussed on older models from the 70s and 80s. Being born at the fag end of the latter ensured I grew up around survivors from the 60s and 70s and came of age (driving wise at least) when 80s cars were still a relatively common sight on our roads. A love of basic hot hatches with too much power and not enough handling finesse meant I was always going to end up as a bit of a Vauxhall fan and, top of the GM hot hatch tree as far as I'm concerned is the Mk2 Astra GTE. It's the GTE that I've always coveted, it was a family friend's GTE that made me so jealous that I nearly had a nervous breakdown (it was 1998 and I was still a long, long way off driving), and the GTE that cemented my love for driving quickly while listening to obnoxiously loud jungle music. What I'm trying to say is that, as far as I'm concerned, the GTE is the bollocks, hot hatch royalty and the best hatch to ever emerge from GM Europe.

I'm far from alone in this respect of course and GTEs have played a massive role in the lives of countless Vauxhall nuts over the last quarter of a century;

it really was the ultimate GM hot hatch, able to kick the stuffing out of the XR3i and, provided you happened to have a 'valver,' could go toe-to-toe with the mighty RS Turbo. The passing years have seen these cars go from being seen as cheap and fast toys to genuine hot hatch icons – and the prices have risen accordingly. The same is true in Poland, the country from which this example originates. Being a Polish Opel it's not actually an Astra but a Kadett E, and what makes it all the more special is that the car's owner, Andrzej Kubica (no relation to the F1 and WRC star), actually started with something much more prosaic, a lowly LS.

HAND-ME-DOWN

"The car belonged to my granddad and we bought it for him from Germany in 2003," Andrzej recalls. "The car was in good condition when we bought it and was still that way when it passed to me in 2009."

There's a whole world of difference (in terms of performance at least) between a 'cooking model' Kadett and the all singing, all dancing GSi, and it didn't take all that long for Andrzej to start looking further up the model range for parts and inspiration. That process was slightly delayed by a minor excursion into the Polish countryside, an incident that inspired Andrzej to



Digi dash – Naturally



This is actually the third XE to have lived in this engine bay!

Is this the coolest Mk2 ever made?
If not, it's up there with the best!



both repair the car and fit something a little more powerful under the bonnet in the process.

"I started speaking to my friend about the possibility of fitting a C25XE V6 from a Calibra but he persuaded me not to as they're heavy engines. Instead he offered me his whole GSi, an 8v car that had a strong engine but had started to rot away."

Using two so-so cars to make one solid one is something of a Vauxhall/Opel staple, and it wasn't too long before Andrzej's Kadett boasted 130bhp or so of 8v power, certainly a vast improvement over the factory fitted 1200 but perhaps



OWNER ANDRZEJ KUBICA

AGE 24
OCCUPATION Work in a motor factors.

FIRST OPEL This one.
TOUGHEST PART OF THE BUILD Having that XE blow up, that and going through so many inner CV joints.

BEST PART OF THE BUILD Seeing it now it's on the road and enjoying the reaction it gets.

**"HE OFFERED ME HIS WHOLE GSi, AN 8V CAR
THAT HAD A STRONG ENGINE..."**



Such a classic interior.
Who doesn't love a Mk2!

not quite enough to totally transform the car. In fact barely 100kms rolled by before Andrzej bit the bullet and started hunting for the engine that really did make the GSi one of the most potent hot hatches of the '80s, the legendary C20XE. Andrzej had to save hard and work extra shifts to fund his expensive engine purchase, particularly as he also needed all the other bolt-on goodies that help turn a standard Kadett E into a fully paid up GSi, including the bumpers, trims and side skirts.

"I got the money together for the XE and pretty much anything else and had started to prepare the car for the conversion, though at this point it made a lot of sense to go over the body to tackle any rust and to make sure it was as solid as possible," Andrzej recalls. "I ended up repainting the whole car in Power Red, an OPC colour."

Now paint choice is about as personal a preference as it's possible to get within the realms of cars, but we're fairly confident when we say that Andrzej made a very good call when he opted for Power Red. It's a shade that makes the whole car look

much more contemporary and modern, a really bright hue and one that really does suit the 80s lines of the Kadett to a tee. Paint applied and any trace of rust well and truly routed, Andrzej set about rebuilding the XE before fitting it into his recently minted car, with the short ratio F16 gearbox from his friend's old GSi retained for cog-swapping duties.

THIRD TIME LUCKY

"This is actually the third XE I've had in the car to date; the first died when the oil pump failed thanks to the previous owner's decision to seal the pump to the block with silicone. That blocked the oil way and resulted in a dead bottom end...I was not happy!"

Clearly not one to be put off by anything as minor as a totalled engine, Andrzej recommenced his Redtop hunt, finally coming up trumps with the one seen here. All the ingredients for a truly belting valver are present and correct; chipped ECU, powercap, K&N induction, free-flowing manifold and system, ported and polished head, and brand new valve train components. Redtop aficionados will be well aware

"IT MADE A LOT OF SENSE TO GO OVER THE BODY TO TACKLE ANY RUST AND TO MAKE SURE IT WAS AS SOLID AS POSSIBLE"



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1998cc C20XE with new pistons, rods and bearings, ported and polished KS700 head with new valves, springs and followers, port matched manifolds, Powercap, OE Kadett GSi airbox with K&N filter, chipped ECU

POWER

170bhp (Owners Estimate)

TRANSMISSION

Close ratio F16 gearbox with 'big block' shafts

SUSPENSION/CHASSIS

Front: Custom coilovers comprising shortened KW struts and H&R springs, polybushes, ARB, painted lower arms

Rear: Custom lowering springs, polybushes, painted lower arms, GSi rear axle and hubs

BRAKES

Front: GSi 256mm discs and calipers, aftermarket pads, braided lines

Rear: Stock GSi discs and calipers, aftermarket pads, braided lines

WHEELS AND TYRES

8x17in OZ Futura alloys

INTERIOR

Kadett GSi dashboard, surround, centre console and 'digi-dash', headlining re-trimmed in black, Sparco bucket seats re-trimmed in black leather and red Alcantara, Schroth four-point harnesses and harness bar

EXTERIOR

Opel Kadett E with full GSi kit including bumpers, skirts and trims, resprayed in OPC Power Red, USDM Pontiac Le Mans rear lights, red indicators, Zender splitter

Is it just us, or are you also wincing in case a single spark lands on that Power Red bodywork!



that no two examples are ever the same, and that an XE built for 160bhp or so can often feel like it's capable of much, much more. This is very much the case with this car, Andrzej having had no trouble seeing off his friend's 196bhp VR6 Golf and a number of 250bhp Astra Hs – there's every chance that he's built himself a very special XE indeed.

Of course part of the reason this particular car looks so good is that massively reduced ride height, something that's long been fairly tricky to achieve on the Mk2/Kadett platform, certainly if you plan on retaining the

use of your spine or want your rear springs to stay in situ. Andrzej realised fairly early on that he'd have to cook up something a little special if he was to ever get the car as low as he wanted, and this eventually culminated in custom front coilovers made from drastically shortened KW dampers and one-off H&R springs, with a set of custom lowering springs at the rear.

"It's a good setup and I'm happy with how it handles but I'm also very tempted to go lower still, that's why me and my boss are in the process of drawing up an air ride system for the car – I want it lying on the floor!"

Another known limitation of both this generation of Kadett and the Corsa A/Nova is their sky-high factory offsets (ET49), something that's always proved a challenge for those keen to fit wider wheels with lower offsets. The stunning mirror polished alloys under this car's arches are actually 17in OZ Futuras, wheels that came to Andrzej boasting a distinctly Opel unfriendly PCD of 5x108 and an offset of ET35. The latter could just about be accommodated by the Kadett's freshly painted arches with a bit of work, but actually getting them to fit the four-stud hubs required some careful re-drilling by one of Andrzej's

equally wheel-obsessed friends.

If there's a theme running throughout this build it's Andrzej almost obsessive attention to detail. No aspect has been left untouched, no area considered too small; it's no exaggeration to say that this homebuilt GSi homage is miles better built and presented than the original GSis that rolled off the Russelsheim line all those years ago. More proof of this can be found in the interior, a full custom job with Sparco bucket seats trimmed black leather and red Alcantara in an effort to ape the scheme found on the Linea Rossa Astra G. It goes without saying that he's also sourced and fitted a GSi digi-dash, surround and centre console, plus an all black roof lining.

THE ULTIMATE GSi?

The result of all this work, all these setback and engine issues? A Kadett with deeply cool wheels, pin-point ride height and an overall look that most GTE/GSi owners can only dream of. Car choice and styling is a personal thing of course, but I'm not ashamed to admit that, in my eyes at least, this is the ultimate GSi – to the point where I made an involuntary noise when I first clapped eyes on it. Better still Andrzej's nowhere near finished with the car, this is one of those projects that could well rumble on for many years yet;

"It was my first car and they're a rare sight on the roads nowadays so of course it's special to me, but I've also got a lot of plans still to come. I'm planning on fitting a roll cage and flat floor, some larger brakes and of course the air suspension setup in the next few months, so watch this space!" ○

Matching Schroth harnesses and awesome retrimmed Sparco buckets



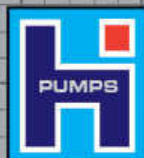


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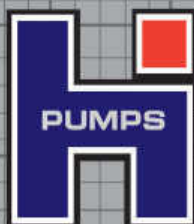
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OPEL TREFFEN 2015

The Germans sure know how to put on a show; just invite Opels from all over Europe and have one massive party!

WORDS AND PHOTOS Steve McCann

We've been covering this event for a few years now but it never gets old.

You only have to look at the ever-expanding size of our UK travelling group to prove its appeal. However, for those of you unaware of Opel Treffen, we should explain the phenomenon. Basically, it's a massive

Opel-fest! It takes place in and around the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben, in the heart of Germany and attracts an incredible 70,000 people each year! The format makes it more of an Opel celebration and festival with non-stop action on and off track for several days.

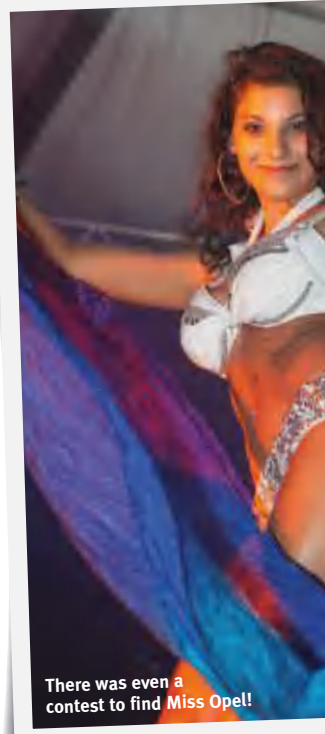
With so much to see and do as well as being surrounded by 20,000 Opels and Vauxhalls, topped off with an amazing atmosphere, it really is the ultimate road trip.

2015 was a special milestone too as it signaled the 20th anniversary of the show so it gave more cause for celebration, as if that was needed!

As expected, this one ticked all the boxes giving us track sessions, demos, 1/8 mile drag racing, drifting, burnout competitions, sound-offs, the obligatory show n' shine, retro displays, trade stands, club stands from all over Europe, party buses and not forgetting the amazing nightlife and atmosphere. Here are just some of the highlights....



The extent of the show was staggering, with cars literally everywhere you looked



There was even a contest to find Miss Opel!

Several Senators were thoroughly abused in the Burnout Arena!



There were nutty 'party buses' everywhere carting drunken revellers about the showground



OPEL TREFFEN

SHOW N SHINE

Saturday is Show n Shine day. A huge area is set-aside for this competition that seems to have an endless amount of trophies up for grabs. Judging takes all day and no wonder! The Germans love their mods and by that we mean big kits, loud paint, pin-striping, airbrushing, Lambo doors and crazy interiors so there's a lot to look at. The retro metal seems to command a more subtle approach though, providing many cars that appeal to UK tastes. Speaking of which, a fine display of British cars lined up in this area too resulting in some trophies being brought back to Blighty!

Someone's been watching too much Fast & Furious!



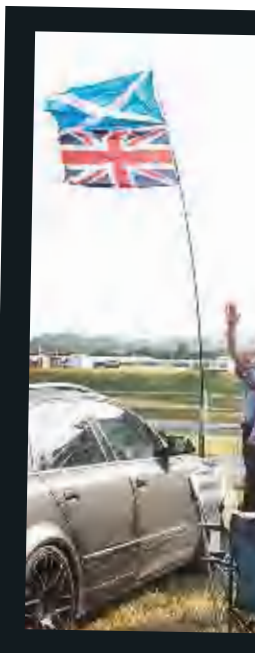
When they look this good it's a shame more people don't tweak Adams



One of these old fellas is actually snapper Steve McCann

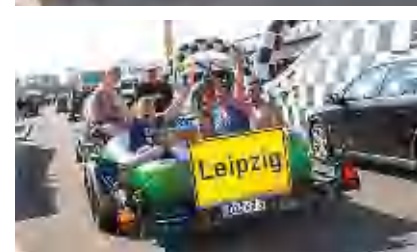


We can honestly say that's a first for us! A flip front Vectra A!





Now that's a mega Manta!

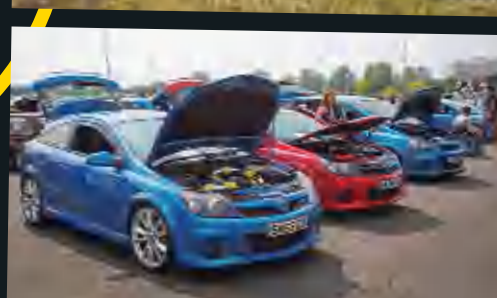
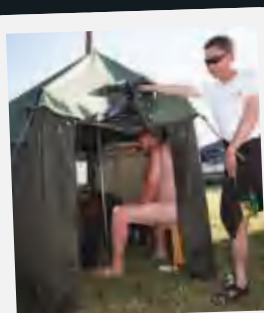


Wahey, it's the British contingent!



CLUB STANDS

Rather than clubs being assembled through specific car models, in Germany it's more common to group up with like-minded Opel enthusiasts from your area. As well as this, there are stands from countries all over Europe like Spain, Denmark and Holland as well as the UK of course, where we were represented by around 30 cars. The Finnish stand impressed too with some fantastic cars as well as a real friendly bunch of people. They also brought a tent sauna... complete with a naked bloke inside, as you do.



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SM TUNING

TRADE STANDS

Most of the trade stands are based in the pit garages and surrounding area. As ever, Opel had a huge presence with a massive marquee, boasting the best of their latest fleet as well as displaying race cars and classics. Mattig were missing this year but Klasen returned with a rolling road and demo cars. Everything from tuning packages, parts, clothing and Opel memorabilia was for sale as well as things like graphics, window-etching and pin-stripping.



While some cars are subtly cool, others, like this Corsa TR are all about the show!



Quirky display of military Omegas



Check out the side exit exhaust on this incredible Opel Commodore. It was built as a drift car, and sports a monster V8



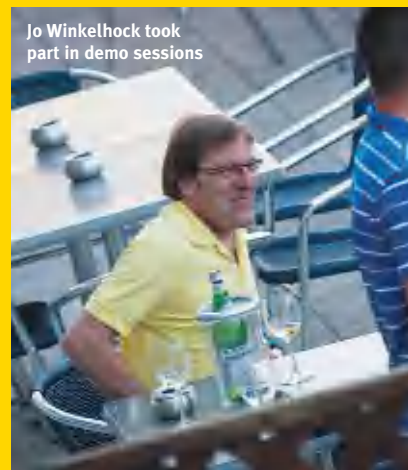
OPEL TREFFEN

TRACK TALES...

For the duration of the show great use is made of the circuit by having it open from morning until night every day as well as changing the use every few hours. This means you can take part in an open track session with your own car or book and drive one of the many OPC demo cars provided by Opel. Then, there are various demos from the likes of Jo Winkelhock, (former BTCC champion & Le Mans winner) before the layout is changed to transform the straight into an 1/8 mile drag strip. Also, the fantastic Hasseröder curve is used for drifting while nearby trackside there's continuous bedlam in a dedicated burnout area. All this is crammed into each day every day so it's a fantastic format to keeps things fresh for drivers and spectators.



Jo Winkelhock took part in demo sessions



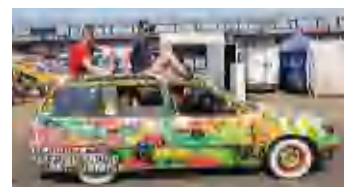
Sections of the track are dedicated to drifting at set times throughout the day – so mental machines like this Manta can have a play!



Another Senator in its natural environment!



There are plenty of cool mods... and a few questionable ones!



There's still a huge love of the Retro, and there are many more cool old Opels than there are over here

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OPEL TREFFEN

HOW TO BUILD A PARTY BUS...

One of the highlights of this show are the very far from road legal 'vehicles' that the Germans build for the sole purpose of driving around the camping areas. To do this successfully, the essential rules are to ditch the exhaust and have an un-silenced manifold sticking out the bonnet, add as many seats as you can and make it look as bonkers as possible! But, some go a lot further, joining cars together, chopping roofs and adding more wheels and axles! Best of all had to be what looked like 2 Kadetts (Astras) chopped and re-joined with 2 engine bays, 12 wheels and a gazebo mounted on the back. Well, we did say it was bonkers!



Surely this is the king of the Party Buses?



We're guessing this is a 'joke' based on a 6-wheeled car in the film *Manta Manta*



Simply stunning Kadett had everyone drooling



Super dated, or super cool? You decide



Something tells us this may have done a burnout or two...



OPEL TREFFEN

FIREWORKS FINALE

Unlike UK shows, this one is all but done by the Saturday evening, albeit after near on a week of madness. Sunday is more of a packing-up day so late Saturday night there's a huge fireworks display to signal the official end of the show. At the same time, thousands of people hit their horns, flash lights and hazards making it one hell of a noisy spectacle. If you want to experience this event in 2016 (and you should!) then contact the UK co-ordinator Chris Harden on chrismk1astra@hotmail.com.



Ex-feature Opel Commodore Berlina is damn near perfect



That's one extreme Insignia!



5-stud wheels give the game away that this Kadett no longer packs a 4-pot lump



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VECTRA VXR



SERIAL THRILLER

Dave Hughes returns to the pages of Performance Vauxhall with his latest creation – a distinctively styled, 310bhp Flame Red Vectra VXR...

WORDS Dan Furr PHOTOS Chris Frosin



FAST FACTS

- ★ 310bhp Stage 1.5 Z20NEH
- ★ Methanol injection system
- ★ AP Racing six-pot brake kit
- ★ Team Dynamics Pro Race 1.3 wheels
- ★ BTCC rear diffuser

VECTRA VXR



Vauxhall should have fitted Pro Races from the factory!

Each of the Vauxhalls that I've been lucky enough to have featured in your magazine have had more 'show' than 'go,'" admits Griffin nut, Dave Hughes, while we wax lyrical with him about the stunning Vectra B and the Euro-styled Cavalier Turbo 4x4 that rolled out of his garage before taking up their starring roles in earlier editions of *Performance Vauxhall*. "I'm hoping to buck the trend with my

latest creation!" he laughs.

The car in question is a Flame Red Vectra C that also happens to be the first four-wheeler to land on Dave's driveway with a VXR badge stuck to its rear end. "I bought a Vectra C SRi prior to getting hold of the VXR," he continues. "I was considering trading the 1.8-litre car for a GSi, primarily because I've been consistently impressed by the various GSi-badged Vauxhalls that I've owned over the years. Sadly, the Vectra C variant didn't get anywhere close to living up to the



It's not half posh in there, and there's no need to go overboard with mods!

OWNER

DAVE HUGHES

AGE 32

JOB RAC patrolman

FAVOURITE VAUXHALL

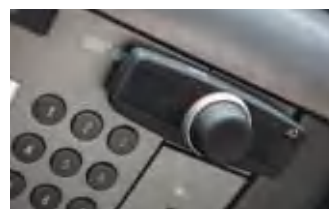
Lotus Carlton

BEST THING ABOUT THE CAR

The low down torque

WHAT'S NEXT? A Stage 3 upgrade

and a limited-slip differential



Vectras come in for a lot of stick because they're perceived by many as 'family cars' and so must be boring. The VXR is anything but boring!



"A TEST DRIVE OF THE ONE I'D GO ON TO PURCHASE HAD ME HOOKED"



high standards set by the factory styling and performance packages of models including the Mk3 Cavalier GSi2000, the Mk2 Carlton GSi3000, Mk3 and Mk4 Astra GSis and my old Vectra B," he frowns.

It might have been packing a tasty 3.2-litre V6 lump producing close to 210bhp, but Dave's appraisal of the Vectra C GSi is bang on the money. Whereas previous GSis had been treated to model-specific body kits, sporty suspension and tweaked engines, the Vectra C version always felt like a compromise in its standard guise thanks to a regular-spec cabin, conservative exterior styling and an underwhelming chassis configuration.

The 2.8-litre turbocharged V6 VXR, on the other hand, is a different beast altogether! "I bought my red road rocket following the publication of a consumer magazine report that summed up by concluding that the Vectra VXR was better than the BMW 330 MSport," Dave tells us. "To be honest, I didn't realise that the VXR was so radically different from all other

Vectra Cs, but a test drive of the example that I would go on to purchase had me hooked," he adds, citing the car's chunky body kit, immediately identifiable alloys and satisfying exhaust note as contributing factors in the decision to empty his wallet.

Dave's dearly departed Cavalier Turbo provided a platform for him to embark on an exercise in outlandish automotive styling. In contrast, he promised his long-suffering wife, Katie, that the VXR would remain in a standard state of tune. "I had the best of intentions, and I really was happy with the way that the car looked. I even said out loud that Vauxhall had made it exactly as I would have wanted!" he laughs.

SLIPPERY SLOPE

As you can probably guess, keeping to his word proved to be a tricky business. "My only complaint at that time was the fact that the car's wheels were showing signs of slight kerb damage," sighs Dave. Unable to ignore what he considered to be an



unsightly cosmetic imperfection, he sent the rims away to be refurbished. Naturally, this turn of events allowed him to choose whatever finish he liked – the perfect opportunity to personalise his new ride!

Opting to have his VXR's alloys covered in a fetching shade of anthracite, the 32-year-old RAC patrolman looked forward to being able to bolt each wheel into its corresponding arch. But wait! Wouldn't the revised rims clash with the factory chrome littered around the body of the car?! "I decided to get the boot strip and window surrounds painted in the same colour as the wheels. This treatment then extended to fog light surrounds and the rear diffuser," he recalls, acknowledging the start of a series of modifications that would transform the appearance of his radiant red six-shooter into the beast that it is today.

With the freshly painted parts installed, the car's ride height became the next target of Dave's beady eye. Subsequently, H&R lowering springs delivered a drop of 40mm. This was just enough to fill the factory arch gap while leaving a sensible amount of headroom in order to allow for a comfortable cruise with the Hughes clan onboard.

POWER GAMES

Despite its split role as project car and family runabout, however, this VXR's proud owner wasn't oblivious to the significant gains in performance that could be squeezed out of the Z28NEH powerplant. "Forum buddies were urging me to apply a Bluefin Stage 1 map to the car's ECU in a bid to boost power to around the 300bhp mark," explains Dave. "An estimated 400lb per foot of torque was also likely following installation of the aftermarket software.



It seemed like a straightforward enough upgrade, and I invested in the necessary DIY mapping handset accordingly," he says.

Sure enough, his five-door hot hatch was chucking out a vastly improved number of ponies after the application of the remapping kit. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this led to an altered exhaust note (one of the key characteristics of the car that had led Dave to buy it in the first place) leaving him feeling as though he had advanced forward in one area, but taken a step back in another.

"I ended up buying a TX Autosport decat deletion kit, a decat pipe and a new exhaust centre section, all with a matching 3in bore and the promise of a fantastic rumble!" chuckles Mr Hughes. Not content with enhancing only the exit airflow qualities of his pride and joy, he also bought a K&N air filter, an enlarged throttle body, a

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

Z28NEH 2792cc 24-valve V6 turbo, Powerflex engine mounts, Stage 1.5 Bluefin map on factory ECU, K&N panel air filter, derestricted air box, enlarged throttle body, painted plenum, custom polished inlet pipe, custom breather kit, 3in solid turbocharger intake pipe, polished actuator, AEM methanol injection system, TX Autosport precat deletion kit, 3in decat pipe, 3in exhaust centre section, powdercoated tailpipes, polished turbo heat shield, Porsche spark plugs, JS Performance red silicone hoses

POWER

310bhp, 420lb/ft torque (estimated)

TRANSMISSION

Front-wheel drive, Getrag F40 six-speed manual gearbox, LUK performance clutch, MTech short shifter

SUSPENSION

Factory adjustable dampers, H&R 40mm lowering springs, Powerflex bushes throughout, Weicher strut brace

BRAKES

AP Racing 'VXRacing' six-piston front calipers with two-piece 362mm discs, rear calipers painted red, Ferodo DS2500 pads, Goodridge braided hoses

WHEELS & TYRES

8.5x19in Team Dynamics Pro Race 1.3 wheels, Michelin Pilot Super Sport 235/35x19 tyres, Courtenay Sport 'VXRacing' centre caps, TPI stud conversion, TPI polarised wheel nuts and valves

BODY

2007 Vectra C VXR, factory Flame Red paintwork, smoothed front bumper, smoothed front splitter, colour-coded grille surround, painted custom bonnet vents, Insignia washer jets, de-wiped rear window, DVG painted grille badge and fog light surrounds, LMF smoked fog lights, smoked side repeaters, smoked LED rear lights, DVG painted tailgate strip and release button, painted window strips, painted BTCC rear diffuser, carbon-fibre rear VXR badge

INTERIOR

Factory VXR half-leather Recaro sport seats, VXR floor mats, custom flat-bottomed steering wheel, Irmscher Astra J pedals, Irmscher door pins, Scangauge II, digital boost gauge, AEM methanol injection controller

ICE

Factory CDC40 head unit with DAB radio and six-disc CD changer, iOH hands free kit, iPod integration kit, JL Audio 10in amplifier, JL250 amplifier in spare wheel well with LED lighting kit, JL Audio front speakers

THANKS

Bradbury's Bodyshop for the excellent paintwork, Jamie at Hot Hatch Corner for fantastic deals on wheels and tyres, Mark Moss for letting me use Autobrite Direct HQ for the photo shoot (and for the supply of fantastic cleaning products!), and to my amazing wife, Katie, for her ongoing love and support.

"I DECIDED TO GET THE BOOT STRIP AND WINDOW SURROUNDS PAINTED IN THE SAME COLOUR AS THE WHEELS"





There's something undeniably satisfying about the 2.8 V6 turbo Z28NEH



Yup, it should come as no surprise that Dave is rather fond of detailing, and keeping his VXR mint



custom polished inlet pipe, a breather kit, a 3in solid turbo intake pipe and a set of colour-coded JS Performance silicone hoses.

A Bluefin Stage 1.5 software update designed to take advantage of the six-cylinder engine's derestricted breathing followed. Power is now guessed to be 310bhp with 420lb per foot of torque, and the car's ability to deliver this hike in horsepower has been greatly improved thanks to an AEM methanol injection system that reduces intake temperatures, and further chassis upgrades in the form of Powerflex mounts and bushes, a Weichers strut brace and a set of 8.5in wide Team Dynamics Pro Race 1.3 19s wrapped in Michelin Pilot Super Sport rubber.

STYLE IT OUT

Courtenay Sport 'VXRacing' centre caps and a TDI stud and nut conversion join the BTCC-inspired multi-spokes in each corner. The touring car theme continues with a replacement rear diffuser made from the original works team moulds. This rare part is a superb addition to the car, and it sits perfectly beneath the genuine carbon-fibre VXR badge and



striking smoked LED rear lights that help to set this Flame Red VXR apart from its contemporaries.

Bonnet vents have a similar impact at the nose of the car, as do its recently-smoked front fog lamps and smoothed bumper. The latter's registration plate recess has been expertly deleted, and a nifty splitter adds just enough depth to allow for the clearance of awkward speed bumps while enhancing the aggressive lines of the VXR's OEM design.

"I'd like to do something with the interior in the not too distant future," muses Dave. "I'm tempted to get the car's Recaro seats re-trimmed, although I have already fitted Irmscher pedals and door pins, a flat-bottomed steering wheel, a Scangauge II and a modest JL Audio ICE kit comprising twin amps,



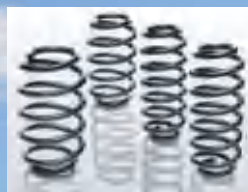
A tasteful install is one of Dave's hallmarks

LED lights and uprated speakers in an effort to make the cockpit a much nicer place to be during long journeys," he remarks.

Thoughts of trimming aside, his immediate attention is focused on installing the latest treat for this great Griffin – a genuine set of AP Racing 'VXRacing' six-piston front brake calipers with 362mm discs and Ferodo DS2500 pads. After all, if you're gonna have as much 'go' as 'show', then your

motor had better be able to stop just as effectively as it can start!

The end result of Dave's efforts amounts to a superb Vectra VXR that offers an equal balance of well-executed aesthetic alterations and serious power upgrades with enough 'wow factor' to keep his love of owning a modified motor fulfilled for a long time to come. That is, of course, until he's ready to start work on his next Performance Vauxhall feature car! ○



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READER RESTO

What started out as a love for 80's cars, culminated in a fantastic Manta Resto. Here's Iain Parkhouse's story...

I've always been into Vauxhalls/Opels and the Manta has always stood out for me. You just can't beat the classic styling and, like they say, they don't make them like they used too. So eight years ago at the age of 20 I started to look for a decent Manta either a hatch or coupe but

nothing seemed to be around back then. I joined OMOC which is a fantastic club, but there was still nothing suitable in my price range, as they were either too expensive or too rotten. But eventually I stumbled across the car I own today only nine miles from my house!

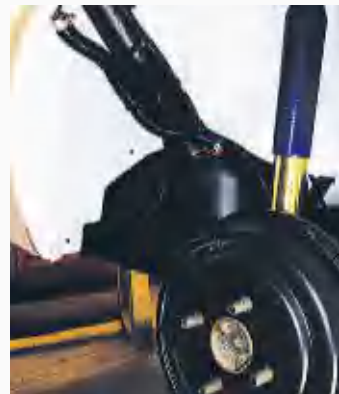
The car itself is a 1988 Exclusive GT hatch which had only 44,000 miles on the clock and amazingly came with full history. As soon as I saw the car I knew I was having it. It was completely original down to the radio cassette which still plays my Val Halen tapes today!



4 The axles were cleaned, and rebuilt with polybushes.



5 Then I mounted them back on the car ready for paint prep.



8 With the car rolling I started to rebuild it back up again to make sure everything was fitted properly before paint.



9 It was still a bit of a mess, but as I was making some progress and the car saw the light of day for the first time in a long time I decided to build the engine up



1 I got the car and took it to my workshop and completely stripped it down, bagging up bolts and labelled everything. The car itself was probably the most solid original Manta I've seen. Other than a patch on the sill and a bit of welding on the inner footwells it was rot free and original. A good find for just 800 quid!



2 After I got all the welding done I primed and stone chipped the whole car and it sat in my workshop for about 6 years! I did a few bits here and there but I just never found the time or motivation to get on with it.



3 Then I discovered that my sister was engaged and I thought it would be a good idea to get the car finished for the wedding without her knowing. I thought I probably had a year to get it done. I restarted the work, stripped the axles, fuel tank, etc and prepped the underside for some two-pack Glacier White.

7 Next I sourced a really rotten GTE hatch for £200. It was beyond saving, but was very useful for parts and had a very tidy interior



6 With freshly painted axles I needed some fresh suspension so a quick phone call to Dampertech proved very helpful. I soon had custom shortened adjustable GAZ dampers and custom springs which lowered the car around 60mm.



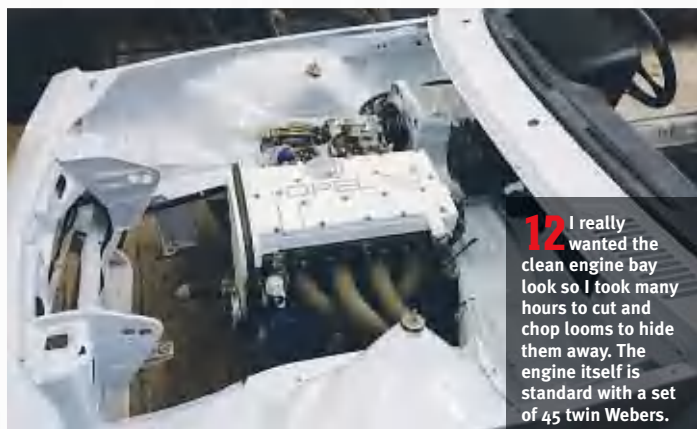
10 I bought C20XE for £300 and it turned out to be an early model with a Coscast head on arrival, which was a result!



11 I cleaned it up mounted the 1.8 manta box with engine mounts and it was time to get it painted.

READER RESTO

13 When it finally came back from its full respray in Glacier White I was over the moon, it looked fantastic! So I wasted no time in bolting bits to it leaving me with 6 months until the wedding.



12 I really wanted the clean engine bay look so I took many hours to cut and chop looms to hide them away. The engine itself is standard with a set of 45 twin Webers.



15 This was definitely the most fun and rewarding part of the build, to see it finally start to look like an actual car!



17 With the interior pretty much done it was time for the small fiddly parts like the side skirts, lights and all other bits that finally came together to complete the car

18 I refurbished the original wheels in gloss black and fitted Astra 16v calipers with vented Audi discs so it does stop well. Then it was ready for the MoT which made me very nervous! Three tries later it had a 12 month ticket – just one week before the wedding!





14 I started in the engine bay and worked my way back through the car. So after the engine I moved on to the carpets and interior trim, much of which I'd salvaged from the donor Manta I bought previously.



16 I managed to get doors boot and glass fitted, although it was a bit daunting at first but I just took my time and had a go. With the help of a good friend (Ryan Gowing) we soon had most of the glass in.



18 It made the wedding no problems at all, and to my first show in the car, Retro Rides. It's not been an easy build but the results made it all more than worth it!



DUTCH COU

WORDS Jarkle PHOTOS Matt Woods

One of the mightiest FWD dragsters in Europe, an Opel with 886bhp and enough silverware to put an Olympic athlete to shame...

Whichever way you cut it 886bhp is a lot of power. That's more than the current grid of F1 cars, more than most of the V8 F1 cars that preceded them and roughly the same as the race power used by the alarmingly fast turbocharged '80s F1 machines.

It's more than any of the mighty Group B cars could call upon in their WRC prime, more than any rally machine has ever had in fact. 886Bhp is way more than the paltry 627bhp offered by the world-beating McLaren F1, more than the F40 and more than any of the German 'uber saloons' that've taken to stalking the outer lanes of motorways across the world. 886bhp is a huge amount of power in a big, hulking great car that's been designed to house it, enough to blur scenery and catch traffic at an alarming rate. Put that amount of pure, unadulterated kinetic shove in something like the Corsa A and things will go one of two ways; you'll either end up in the mother of all accidents, or you'll set a string of class records and be able to stake a claim to being an all round Vauxhall hero.

And that's precisely what Eljan Timmler from The Netherlands has done with his Corsa A, and the resulting



RAGE

FAST FACTS

- ★ 886bhp C20XE turbo
- ★ Garrett GTX3582r
- ★ 2xTial 44mm wastegates
- ★ The world's fastest Corsa/Nova
- ★ 8.89 second quarter-mile



DRAG CORSA A



buzz bomb is every bit as certifiable as you'd expect. Like all the best projects, this one started off very humble indeed; powered by a tired 1.2 when it came into Eljan's ownership, the '85 car soon found itself with 2.0 8v power, then, of course, a C20XE. Redtop power certainly improved matters and helped Eljan set some respectable quarter-mile times, the highlight probably being an 11.922 at 110.2mph. It's worth pointing out that this was no normal, tired, 130bhp-ish XE, this was a seriously well spec'd NA engine with a rock solid bottom end, painstakingly honed head, ITBs and the ability to send 240bhp to the front wheels. We're underlining this so it's clear to all that Eljan's next step, the decision to go down the forced induction route, wasn't taken lightly.

"It was a brilliant car and the XE setup was great, but I've always dreamt of building an eight second drag car and there was just no way that the C20XE was going to be able to deliver, certainly not in NA form," he explains.

BRACE YOURSELVES

Now it's one thing slotting an XE between the front wings of a Corsa, it's a time honoured swap and one that's been a staple for over twenty years now, it's quite another fitting a monstrously powerful C20LET with the intention of pushing for blink-and-you'll-miss-it quarter mile times. With this in mind Eljan started off by gutting the car, stripping it back in order for it to be properly braced and strengthened. At this point it was 2007 and, though he didn't know it at the

time, Eljan's Corsa wouldn't see the strip again for six long years.

The Corsa shell was swiftly dispatched to the guys at DP-Engineering where it was further braced and stitch welded, while the original XE was reduced to its constituent parts and prepared for turbocharging. Of course there's not a great lot of difference between the XE and the LET in standard guise, and converting the former to forced induction has been done many times before; the guys at DP-Engineering simply drilled a new oil feed for the turbo, adjusted the compression and fitted a set of 86.5mm Wiseco pistons into the block.

That was the easy part, actually building an engine suitably equipped to make a mammoth 886bhp took a

whole lot more effort and more than a few custom parts. Peek down the front of the block and you'll see that this is no simple KKK16 arrangement; Eljan really has gone all out by fitting a Garrett GTX3582r with Tial .82 v-band housing sat atop a one-off DP-Engineering manifold and leading to none too subtle exhaust that exits halfway up the bonnet! The eagle eyed turbo geeks among you will also no doubt have clocked the twin 44mm Tial wastegates and 50mm BOV, both evidence of the seriousness of this setup and the sheer force it's expected to cope with, while huge 2200cc Bosch injectors are just about big enough to chuck the amount of fuel required to keep the barely contained combustion cycle going apace.

"If building this car has taught me



"IT'S BETTER TO HAVE AN OVER-SPEC'D ENGINE THAN ONE THAT'S RUNNING AT THE VERY LIMIT ALL THE TIME"

anything it's that you need to set yourself an ideal power figure at the beginning, then slowly work towards it by saving hard and buying the best parts you can. It's much better to have an over-spec'd engine than one that's running at the very limit all the time."

We've featured a fair few dragsters over the years and are always impressed by both their power outputs and the attention to detail their builder's invariably invest in them, but none have looked quite as perfect as this Corsa. It really is an engine with the remnants of a Corsa (just about) squeezed around it – you're certainly left in doubt as to its intended purpose.

LOOM WITH A VIEW

"The guys at DP-Engineering really did do an amazing job with the engine, and

OWNER ELJAN TIMMLER

AGE 31

JOB I work in a body shop

FIRST VAUXHALL Opel Corsa B GSi

TOUGHEST PART OF THE BUILD Working out how to get a small, box-shaped car go fast down the quarter-mile!

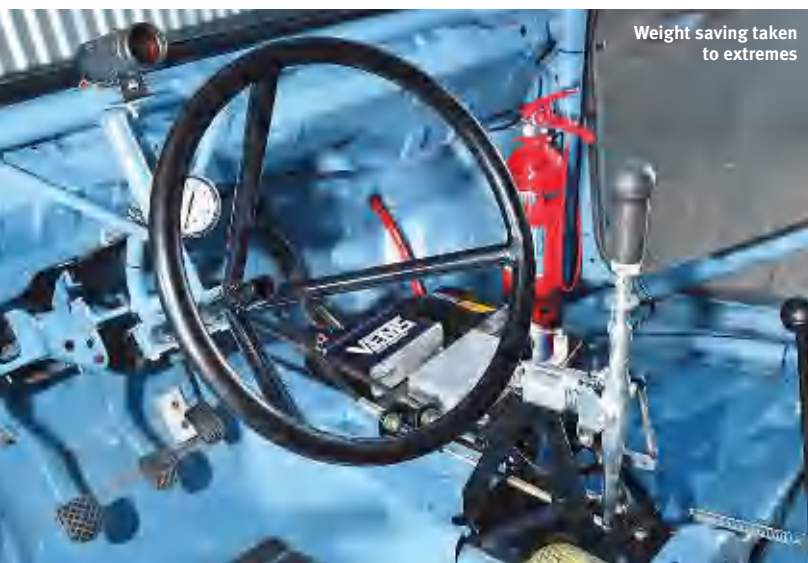
MOST REWARDING PART OF THE BUILD Setting the record breaking time in front of my friends and family.

my friend Boris Rieken's custom wiring loom has been equally effective, especially now we've got the Vems management sorted and the whole setup carefully mapped."

Clearly looking to play the long game as far as number chasing was concerned, Eljan started out with 'just' 777bhp in 2013, the



DRAG CORSA A



Weight saving taken to extremes



recently rebuilt car's first full year of competition. Despite being earmarked as something of a test and an opportunity to identify any reliability niggles 2013 delivered, Eljan netting a best time of 10.62 seconds – a warning shot across the bow for his competitors.

Development continued rapidly and contributed to the sophisticated transmission now found bolted to the side of the XE, an F18 four-speed. This is clearly a dedicated, focussed drag

racer and not a car that's ever likely to have to deal with everyday traffic, so Eljan's not missed having a fifth cog. Besides, in its place he has a custom Sapinho dog-box arrangement, a Quaife LSD and custom driveshafts (yeah, we're a way beyond standard 'big block' shafts here), all of which help get as much of that power to the tarmac as mechanically possible.

With the car up and running in a reliable fashion Eljan pushed ahead with a programme of development,

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1998cc C20XE turbo with OE crank, 86.5mm Wiseco pistons, Arrow con rods, Z20LET head gasket, uprated fixings, Cat Cams cam package consisting of double valve springs, retainers, followers and pulleys, lightly ported and polished head, uprated oil pump, 70mm throttle body, 4x Bosch 2200cc injectors, Turbosmart FPR1200, Aeromotive fuel pump, E85 bio ethanol fuel, Garrett GTX3582r w/Tial .82 v-band turbine, DP-Engineering exhaust manifold and system, DP-Engineering water to air chargecooler, 2x44mm Tial wastegates, 50mm Tial BOV, custom DP-Engineering inlet manifold, silicone hoses, custom pipework, custom wiring loom from Boris Rieken, AEM CDI unit, Vems management

POWER

886bhp at 2.75bar, 921nm

TRANSMISSION

F18 four-speed Sapinho dog-box, Quaife LSD, cable shifter from Lamers Racing, custom driveshafts

SUSPENSION

Front: G&M coilovers
Rear: Suzuki GSXR 750 dampers

BRAKES

Front: Wilwood Superlight four-pot calipers and drilled 252mm discs
Rear: Two-pot Grimeca calipers and motorbike brakes

WHEELS AND TYRES

Front: 7.5x13in Lenso VDPs with 8.7x25in M&H tyres
Rear: 3x15in BBS three-piece alloys, various tyres

INTERIOR

Fully stripped interior, multi-point weld in roll cage with door bars, Kevlar bucket seat, RCJ Racing harnesses and window net, remote engine and fuel shut-offs, fire suppression system, oil pressure and shift lights, rear mounted alloy radiator, custom steering wheel

EXTERIOR

1985 Opel Corsa A in light blue, removable fibreglass front end, various composite panels, spoiler and drag bars

THANKS

My good mate Boris Rieken for making the whole wiring loom on the car and for taking care of the data logging and tuning at the track, Roel de Greef and Berend van den Beld for building the engine with me. David Verburg, Berend van den Beld, Karim Abanoun, Quincy Matulessy, Bob Prins, Marco de Waal, Pieter Ooninx, My sponsors: Dp-engineering, Tiny turtle caps, Marcosupplies, Bwbikes, My parents and sister who standing behind me for 100%, Falco Rumpel and Luke Stevenson for supporting the Fwd drag race scene.

There's something oddly comical about such fat fronts and such skinny rears



seeking higher BHP figures and lower quarter mile times with more boost. Upping it to 2.5bar left him with 817bhp and a best time of 9.30 seconds in 2014, while this year the boost was wound all the way up to 2.75bar and the Corsa was trailered to the spiritual home of European drag racing, Santa Pod.

"I've been before and love the place, love the vibe and the friendly, laid-back atmosphere. There was never any question of us not bringing

“I LOVE SANTA POD, I LOVE THE VIBE AND THE FRIENDLY, LAID-BACK ATMOSPHERE.”



A lot of people get hung up on a FWD car having what they consider to be 'wheelie bars'. But they're hugely beneficial to prevent weight transfer away from the front wheels

DRAG CORSA A



About as far removed from its humble origins as it's possible to get

the car along at some point!" A long, expensive trip from Holland to rural Northamptonshire could well have ended in disappointment – such are the vagaries of motorsport – but Eljan and his team struck lucky; they got great weather, a quiet strip and the opportunity to really see what the ballistic Corsa could do. The hard won result of all those years spent perfecting the car and chasing power? A stunning 9.2 seconds, achieved thanks to a whopping power figure of 886bhp. That well and truly set the benchmark as far as the UK's FWD drag racing community was concerned, though it's still a little way off Eljan's quickest time to date, a stonking 8.89 seconds. That's a figure that makes this officially the world's quickest Nova/Corsa A and means that Eljan can proudly claim to have built Europe's 4th quickest front wheel drive

drag car.

"That was the best part of the whole project for sure, even better because it happened in front of all my close friends and family, the people who've supported me and followed the build for all these years. That one moment made every penny spent, every hour used and every headache suffered worth it."

One of the craziest cars ever to have been featured on these pages, built by one man with a dedication few can match and a genuine warmth and deep passion for his sport. We're massively proud of what Eljan's achieved and can't wait to see what he does next with this incredible car, particularly as he's now pushing to break through the magic four-figure power barrier. Looks like the UK's FWD drag racing community needs to up its game... over to you guys. ○



With so much power, stopping swiftly is a pretty important consideration

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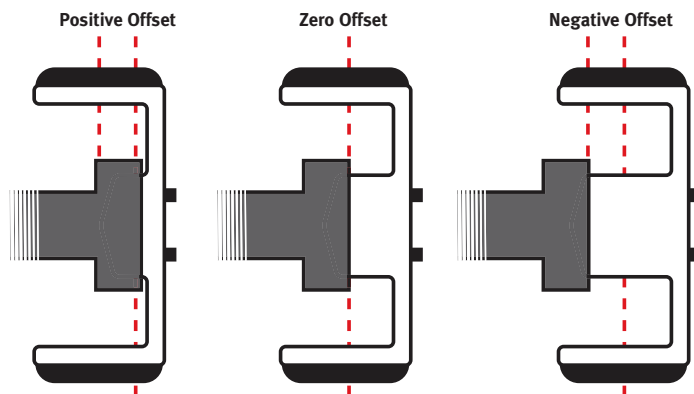
We're often asked technical stuff via the medium of email, and Facebook

about wheels and fitments. Many of you will already know all this stuff, but there are a lot of misconceptions and downright confusion over the issue. So we've grabbed a few minutes with Mark Ewington, the

boss at Cades Wheels to answer all your questions about wheels and wheel fitment.

How do you go about designing a new wheel?

Well unlike most people imagine, it doesn't come out of thin air, it's actually pretty involved. Every wheel company is different in their approach. We like to look at market trends in terms of style and sizing and then



sketch some freehand ideas. When we get one we like it has to be professionally rendered and drawn in 3D for the factory. In the case of cast

wheels, like standard wheels and the vast majority of aftermarket wheels, only then can we start making prototypes, moulds and final versions. It's not a cheap process and that's why most wheels come in a limited number of sizes – you need a whole new mould for every one.

I've been told I need to fit coilovers for my wheels. Why?

Coilovers have slimmer springs and cups than standard suspension so it's probably because you need the clearance inside the arches for the extra girth. Then again it could be that offset of the wheels is a little too high. Offset is one of the most important factors in getting your fitment spot on, it's basically how far your wheels sit in the arches. Low offset wheels that are too far in could foul on the suspension or steering components, high offset



wheels that are too far out can foul on the arches. Any rubbing at all is an instant MoT failure, not to mention dangerous.

What does ET38 mean?

That's how we express the offset of a wheel. The ET comes from the German word 'Einpresstiefe' which means 'insertion depth' and the number is the distance in mm from the centre line of the wheel. In the case of ET38, which is a positive offset (as opposed to ET-38), it means the mounting surface of the wheel is 38mm closer to the front of the wheel than the centerline. This will sit 38mm deeper into the arch than a wheel that's ETo.

Can I fit my standard tyres to a new set of wheels?

If you're fitting bigger or massively wider wheels then they won't fit but, as long as the new wheels are the same diameter and a similar width, there's no reason why you can't. If your tyres are brand new I can see why you'd want to but bear in mind most dealers offer wheel and tyre packages that can be a lot more economical if you'll be needing to replace the tyres anytime soon. These guys will usually buy matched tyres in bulk and have them ready fitted to the wheels – all you need do is bolt them on.

They say I shouldn't do up my wheels with a big bar, why is that?

It's tempting I know because obviously you don't want them coming off, but tighter isn't always better because at

the very least over torquing will damage the bolt holes on the wheels. The worst case scenario will be stripped threads on your studs or in the bolt holes making the wheels even

more likely to fly off. Always use a torque wrench to the manufacturer's standard spec and, even more importantly, avoid banging them on with a big powerful impact gun.

Why do some wheels cost hundreds and some wheels the same size cost thousands?

There can be a number of reasons but the most simple answer is that some manufacturing processes are more expensive. In the case of forged or

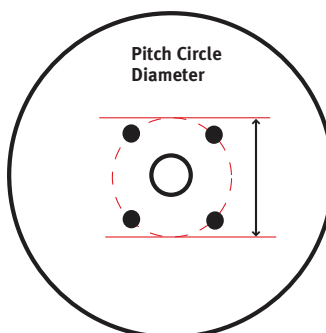
multi-piece wheels there's a lot of work and materials involved to get a finished product. That, coupled with the fact that they're generally rarer than cast wheels, are usually made to order and are mostly finished with custom paint, chrome or anodizing, pushes the price up significantly too. Off-the-shelf cast wheels are generally less expensive because they're made in huge batches and all finished ready to go.

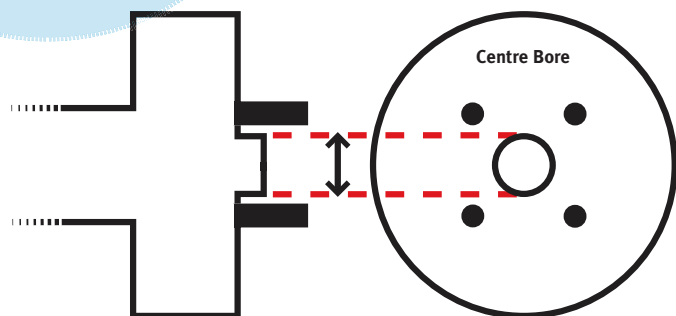
What is the PCD?

It stands for 'Pitch Circle Diameter' If your PCD is 4x110 the 4 represents the number of studs/bolt holes, and the 110 is the diameter in mm of an imaginary circle which passes through the centre of the studs.

Why do bigger cars have more studs/bolt holes than smaller cars?

It's a safety thing, a bit like how a 16-wheel artic has 10 or 12 lug holes. For heavier or more powerful cars usually the number of studs increases – it's a simple case of





spreading the load over more studs or bolts.

My new wheels come with some plastic rings in a fitting kit, what are they for?

These are spigot rings and can be found on most aftermarket wheels so one wheel size can be used on numerous applications. Modern wheels are hubcentric meaning the vehicle hub takes most of the load as opposed to the studs or nuts. To do this safely the wheel has to sit snugly on the hub. These



rings reduce the centrebore of aftermarket wheels to match that of your car.

Apparently I need to use radius nuts with my wheels, what are they?

It's really important to match the wheel nut/bolt seat to the wheel otherwise they won't tighten properly, could damage the bolt holes



and will most certainly be dangerous. There are various types of nut/bolt seat, the most common being tapered but the one you want has a rounded seat. You'll find Most new wheels will come with a fitting kit containing the correct nuts or bolts.

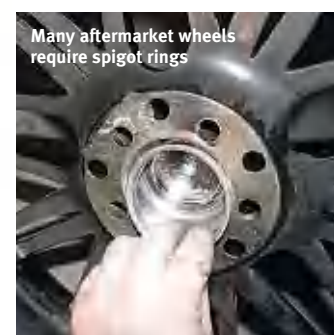
I have a set of wheels that are ET40 offset but have been told my car needs ET35, what can I do?

The simplest way would be to get yourself a 5mm spacer to push the wheel 5mm out and bring the offset down to where it needs to be.

Some race cars used to use magnesium wheels? Why don't we get magnesium road wheels?

Some of the first lightweight racing wheels were made of magnesium and 'mag' wheels became popular on road cars in the 60s. The trouble with magnesium though is it rapidly breaks down when exposed to moisture and is always susceptible to pitting and corrosion. They're also pretty much impossible to put out if they catch fire from a burning tyre or scraping on the road because magnesium can burn under water and CO₂. For that reason they don't make them anymore and wheels are now cast in aluminum alloy. So yeah, he could have had a set sometime in the past, I'd still love a set myself.

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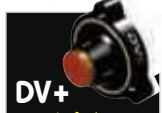
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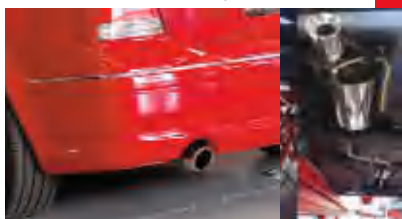
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KAMILO RADZIMOWSKI

CORSA A SALOON

We've got so much time for Kamilo's Opel Corsa TR (The TR is the European designation for the saloon). It's a prime example of when less is more, and shows that the Polish tuning scene is as up to date as ours. Building on a mint shell the little Corsa is propelled by the original 1.2 engine, but instead of having a stance like a tractor it sits perfectly over a set of KW Variant 2 coilovers. The alloys are oh-so-Euro 7.5 and 8.5x15in Gottis with stretched 165/45x15 tyres. It just goes to show that you don't need a million bhp and more wings than the Batmobile to make a stunning car. Images courtesy of PhotoWonderland.pl.



TOM BAXTER

ASTRA VXR

22 year old Tom bought his Astra a couple of years ago as a standard example, and has carried out a selection of great mods. Externally there is a smoothed bumper, LED rear light cluster, custom side skirts, a splitter and RS bonnet vents, alongside gloss black detailling. Under the bonnet he has taken it to Stage 3 level with around 300bhp. The 18in Fox alloys complete the package, and Tom reckons that a house move has curtailed plans for any more mods, although we reckon he won't be able to stop tinkering!





RICK BASRA **VECTRA CDTi**

Here we have Rick Basra's 150CDti Vectra estate. It was apparently in quite a state of neglect when Rick first got his hands on the car, but he's sorted that right out by, "changing a few panels, removing a few dents, sorting DPF problems and cleaning and machine polishing it". On top of that Rick has remodelled the front end, dropped it 45mm and fitted a set of 18in CMS alloys. Not a bad looking load lugger at all!



MAT HASTE **ZAFIRA GSi**

Often overlooked in the performance Vauxhall world, the Zafira GSi is a superb compromise between practicality and performance and it's something Midlands-based Mat Haste knows all about. His Zafira GSi is running with Stage 3 upgrades to provide a pokey package, and a Evo-esque front splitter (apparently designed by Mat), a pair of Jag bonnet vents, and a set of Supersport suspension components mean this is a real looker too.

According to Mat he also has a colour coded roof box, which must make it quite a sight!



JOSH WALKER **CORSA C**

As a first time car the Corsa C takes some beating. This fine example belongs to Sheffield-based Josh. At just 18 years old he's currently at college on a car bodywork course, but that's not prevented him from tinkering with his C. FK coilovers and BBS style wheels look great under the arches of the 1.0 Vauxhall, and Irmischer side skirts, and splitter add to the overall effect. It's clearly a tidy little car, and one Josh is very proud of. Good work!



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ASTRA NURURGRING



Prototype Eibach rear anti-roll bar looks great in contrasting orange

Special editions have been around almost as long as car manufacturers have been trying to flog us their wares, and are often employed towards the end of a specific model's life as a way to prop up flagging sales and to ensure the car in question 'goes out with a bang.' Of course there are two kinds of special editions; those that are simply the product of an over-zealous marketing department and that come with nothing more 'special' than stickers and trims, and those that offer a demonstrable advantage over the 'regular' cars they're based on. Homologation specials can sometimes be lumped into this latter category, giving us icons like the Chevette HS and HSR, Ascona and Manta 400 and Nova Sport, but it also includes road-ready specials.

The Astra VXR Nurburgring undoubtedly sits very near the top of the tree of Vauxhall performance special editions as it built on everything that made the VXR so great in the first place; accessible performance, everyday reliability and just a hint of untoward automotive hooliganism. Granted Vauxhall weren't exactly sparing with the Nurburgring graphics and badges but they also chucked in those cool wheels, the brilliant white paint and, of course, that barking Remus exhaust system.

ENHANCED ASTRA

All cool gear we're sure you'll agree, but these cars are now old enough to have fallen into the hands of the Vauxhall faithful, people like Adam Benton. Now Adam's not like the majority of UK tuners, for starters he runs his own Vauxhall tuning business,



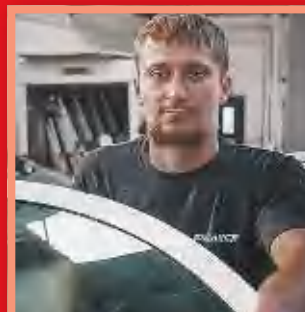
AEM water/meth injection keeps temps down to aid power

Enhance Performance, but, and here's where he differs from most, he's not obsessed by power and chasing massive bhp figures. In fact he'd much rather have a capable all rounder, a car that can actually use every last one of its bhp.

"I've always been a huge fan of the

BTCC and loved it when Vauxhall were competing in the championship," he explains. "That's led to me being more interested in building an all rounder, a car that can exploit its performance without being too powerful and unusable."

That's not to say that this VXR



OWNER ADAM BENTON

AGE 24
OCCUPATION Fabricator
FIRST VAUXHALL Corsa B 1.2 Club
WORST PART OF THE BUILD Thinking about how much I've spent on it!
BEST PART OF THE BUILD That first drive with the Garrett on was pretty special.



Z20LEH not only looks fantastic, it also delivers around 400bhp

**“...THAT’S LED TO ME BEING MORE INTERESTED IN BUILDING AN ALL
ROUNDER, A CAR THAT CAN EXPLOIT ITS PERFORMANCE”**



Screamer pipe exiting from the bonnet is comically controversial



ASTRA NURURGRING



Track cars don't have to be stripped to bare bones to be fun

It isn't fast, 400bhp isn't to be sniffed at, just that getting it to this stage has taken a balanced, considered course of modifications. The car was bought by Adam's dad brand new, before finally passing into his hands around eighteen months ago. Back then it was totally stock, had a complete service history and, significantly, Adam knew every aspect of its history. Project car starting points don't get much better, though Adam's happy to admit that, in retrospect, he probably should've used a regular VXR as a base.

Adam started out by reviewing the VXR's suspension and brake setup, opting to swap the factory uprights for Bilstein coilovers and the OE brakes for a Tarox six-pot caliper kit. These were certainly a step up from the original kit and edged Adam closer to his goal of a real world touring car, but the brakes still weren't quite up to scratch.

"I still wanted a bit more 'bite' and have had good experiences with

DS3000 pads in other Astras. The only snag was that those pads don't fit Tarox calipers, they only work with Alcon or K-Sport kits and the fact that the former were used by Vauxhall in the BTCC made that particular choice pretty easy," explain Adam with a grin.

The suspension arrangement has also been given a further upgrade, with the VXR now sat atop Eibach Pro Street coilovers, a full set of Powerflex bushes and more than a few experimental parts, most of which are the direct result of Adam's own track experience in the Astra. Cast your eyes down the spec list and you'll spot a prototype rear ARB, a 24mm front ARB, R&D Motorsports solid subframe bushes and camber bolts.

BOTTOMS UP

There's a chance that the preceding paragraphs have given the impression that this car is a bit of a conservative one, so it's probably about time we dispel any doubts about its performance capabilities. Towards the end of last year Adam had perfected the car's chassis and was happy with how it was handling so it was time to go to town on the engine and push for more power. The Z20LEH was carefully disassembled, then re-built with key attention paid to bottom end strength and reliability, hence the decision to fit PEC I-beam rods



Gauge pods mounted in the dash vents are always a winner in our book



“ I WANTED TO DEVELOP MY OWN TUBULAR MANIFOLD KIT, HENCE WHY I OPTED FOR THE GTX2867R ”



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1998cc Z20LEH with PEC I-beam con rods and ARP rod bolts, CatCams fast road cam set, Piper race spec double valve springs, Garrett GTX2867R, Tial .86 exhaust housing, Enhance Performance V-band tubular manifold kit, Turbosmart 45mm Hypergate, 1000cc Injector Dynamics injectors, Turbosmart 25mm recirc valve, Enhance Ultimate PowerPipe kit, Enhance 90mm inlet pipe, JS Performance breather and ancillary kits, JS Performance coolant hoses, Airtec stage 3 intercooler with Enhance boost pipes, EDS inlet manifold, thermal inlet gasket, Powerflex black series front engine bush, Enhance 76mm full race exhaust system, R&D Motorsports a/c removal kit/under drive pulley, ProAlloy radiator, AEM fuel pump, Enhance oil catch tank kit, AEM water/meth injection, Rabbid remaps software

POWER

(Owner's estimate) 400bhp

TRANSMISSION

M32 six-speed gearbox, Mfactory plate diff, Enhance Performance ultimate gearbox breather kit, Powerflex black series gearbox bush

SUSPENSION

Eibach Pro Street coilovers, 24mm front ARB and prototype Eibach rear ARB, Eibach camber bolts, 3mm wheel shims, Powerflex ARB and wishbone bushes, R&D Motorsports solid subframe bushes, powder coated front subframe and lower arms

BRAKES

Front: Alcon 888 four-pot calipers and grooved and dimpled discs, DS3000 pads orange braided lines, ATE Superblue fluid
Rear: CRN rear 'J' hook discs, DS3000 pads, Orange braided brake hoses, ATE Superblue fluid
Brake ducts in fog lights

WHEELS AND TYRES

8x17in Team Dynamics TD1.2 in Anthracite with Federal RS-R 235/45x17 tyres

INTERIOR

Fully stripped, Enhance rear four-point roll cage, Sparco Pro2000 fixed bucket seats, various boost, pressure and temperature gauges

EXTERIOR

Astra VXR Nurburgring edition in white, bonnet modified for screamer pipe exit, tinted side repeaters, fog light removal for brake ducts, XP2 lower grill, Richbrook aerial, de-wipered rear

THANKS

JS Performance for all their support, my dad for allowing me to build cars in his workshop, Rabbit remaps for the software and mapping, and Warren at WG Motorworks



Team Dynamics rims house monster Alcon 888 brakes

and suitably beefy fueling and cooling gear. If there's one massive advantage to owning your own tuning company it's the ability to design and build brand new, home-brew parts, and that's precisely what Adam's done.

"I had the choice between a hybrid Ko4 of some description, or a new manifold and a big Garrett or similar. If I'm honest I'd have been happy with the hybrid but I wanted to develop my own tubular manifold kit, hence why I opted for the GTX2867R in the end."

The resulting kit has proved ultra-effective on Adam's VXR and has allowed him to push through the 400bhp barrier, but perhaps more significant is the fact it's been a commercial success, with plenty of other Vauxhall owners taking the plunge and opting for an Enhance Performance V-band setup. It's also significant as it's the component that, in Adam's eyes, marked the turning point, the moment that the VXR went from being a well sorted fast road car, to a focussed track day machine.

DREAM SCREAM

Finally we get to the aspect of this build that's proved most controversial, an addition that's been very much a 'Marmite mod' and continues to annoy those who feel that this, one of the most special of all VXR variants, should remain largely as Luton intended – that screamer pipe! We don't need to tell you that there's really no such thing as a subtle or conservative screamer pipe, they are one of the hallmarks of

Owning your own tuning firm certainly has its advantages



automotive hooliganism after all, but the one proudly jutting out of the bonnet of Adam's car really does take the biscuit.

"That found its way onto the car as part of the Garrett-V-band conversion, though the decision to route it through the bonnet was based on my desire for the car to stand out," explains Adam. "It certainly gets a few comments at shows and I've heard a number of people mutter 'ruined' to themselves, but it's my car at the end of the day."

Screamer pipe aside, this is one resolutely focussed VXR. OK so the Nurburgring variant is already a rawer and more uncompromising beast than the regular road car, but Adam's tweaks and ethos have taken this to a whole new level. No one component or line of tuning has been allowed to dominate proceedings and to drag the build in one set direction, and the result is a fine all-rounder. Adam's managed to take the original ethos of the Nurburgring edition, build and develop it – and not ruin it by going too far.

As for the future? Well Adam's happy to keep on developing the car and to improve upon it in any way he can, though he also admits that taking it much further will entail some pretty serious modifications.

"I've been contemplating going all out and converting it into a wide track car, much like the 888 Astras from the BTCC. We'll see how it goes though, as there certainly won't be any coming back from that point."

Watch this space and watch it closely! ○

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DYNO

On the rolling road this month...

HIGHLIGHTS

HIGHEST
377 BHP

LOWEST
155 BHP



VAUXHALL DRIVER'S CLUB DYNO DAY

PHOTOS Ash Cashfield & Mark Watts

Courtenay Sport is the destination for a dose of East Anglian rolling road day action...

When you think of Norfolk you may think of quiet sleepy countryside, Sunday drivers and tractors! However venture as far up as North Walsham and you will stumble across one of the most renowned tuning companies in the Vauxhall world, Courtenay Sport. Having this right on your doorstep is a blessing for many Vauxhall-blooded petrol heads who choose to take everything from Novas to VXR8s to this 'holy grail' of tinkering and tuning expertise.

This love of all things Vauxhall has lead to this region being home to a very strong and diverse club of Griffin enthusiasts. One of these clubs is the East Anglian branch of the Vauxhall Driver's Club headed up by Aaron Wright and Timme Custard. Having organised many track days in the past, this club's members decided it was

time to put their cars head-to-head, and where better than the renowned Courtenay Sport.

After a few emails back and forth to Jon Shield the date was set and the club members set about implementing last minute mods in an effort to try and eek out those all important horses ready for the big day.

The day came, the sun was shining and the crisp cool air gave near perfect conditions for a day on the dyno.

Members assembled from as far as Kings Lynn and an eclectic mix of VXRs, GSIs, SRIs and more soon filled the car park, spilling out onto the road of the North Walsham Industrial Estate.

Aaron's Stage 3 Arden Astra VXR was the first to be strapped down at 8:30am and unfortunately hit a couple of snags. After some speedy fault finding from the boys at Courtenay the culprit was diagnosed as a faulty coilpack, Something Courtenay



thankfully had in stock, a new one was fitted and it made a strong 284bhp.

A total of 17 cars ran on the day and all made very good figures, a true testament to the capabilities of the Courtenay Sport team having worked on a vast majority of these cars.

All-in-all everyone involved had a brilliant day. It was great to see faces old and new and it can be definitely

recommended as an excellent event to run for your local club, the guys at Vauxhall Drivers Club are already planning another for 2016!

CONTACT

Vauxhall Drivers Club
www.vauxhalldriversclub.co.uk

TOP COMMENT

"Happy Days"



17th SEAN KEMP | 155BHP | ASTRA SRI CDTi



ENGINE Standard
CLAIMED 155bhp
ACTUAL 155bhp
 & 295lb/ft
OPERATOR Nice standard car.
REACTION Pleased how smooth it ran for a standard model, and for its age!



16th DAVID BUXTON | 221BHP | CORSA SRI



ENGINE Piper exhaust, Courtenay intercooler, panel filter, Courtenay Stage 1 map
CLAIMED 220bhp
ACTUAL 221bhp
 & 226lb/ft
OPERATOR Good power, needs new parts mapped in.
REACTION Very happy.



15th RYAN WRIGHT | 237BHP | ZAFIRA



ENGINE De-cat, FMIC, x-over delete, cat-back, cone filter, VXR turbo
CLAIMED 215bhp
ACTUAL 237bhp
 & 250lb/ft
OPERATOR Nice power and torque.
REACTION Not bad for a family wagon.



14th CONNOR HARRIS | 257BHP | ASTRA VXR



ENGINE Piper exhaust
CLAIMED 240bhp
ACTUAL 257bhp
 & 265lb/ft
OPERATOR Good standard car.
REACTION Very happy considering it's standard + Piper.



13th MARTIN WONES | 276BHP | ASTRA VXR



ENGINE Piper, CDTi airbox, TX intercooler
CLAIMED 250bhp
ACTUAL 276bhp
 & 271lb/ft
OPERATOR Very good for standard map.
REACTION More than expected. Very happy.



12th DARREN ANTHONY | 271BHP | ASTRA VXR



ENGINE Remus, airbox
CLAIMED 265bhp
ACTUAL 271bhp
 & 263lb/ft
OPERATOR Good
 standard car.
REACTION Happy days!



11th HAYLEY FIRMAN | 281BHP | ASTR VXR NUR



ENGINE Courtenay
 Stage 2 remap,
 CDTi airbox
CLAIMED 275bhp
ACTUAL 281bhp
 & 306lb/ft
OPERATOR Good
 Stage 2.
REACTION As
 expected.



10th RUSS MEIN | 281BHP | ASTRA VXR



ENGINE Courtenay
 cooler & Stage 3, Blue
 Flame turbo back
CLAIMED 296bhp
ACTUAL 281bhp
 & 320lb/ft
OPERATOR Low on
 boost.
REACTION Work yet to
 be done...



9th AARON WRIGHT | 284BHP | ASTRA VXR



ENGINE TX Cooler,
 uprated Ko4, CDTi
 airbox, Courtenay
 Stage 3 & top hat
CLAIMED 285bhp
ACTUAL 284bhp
 & 312lb/ft
OPERATOR Good
 power, miss-firing.
REACTION Needs
 new coilpack.



8th CHRIS FRENCH | 295BHP | ASTRA VXR



ENGINE Courtenay
 Stage 3 & FMIC, Piper,
 Pircross + more
CLAIMED 305bhp
ACTUAL 295bhp
 & 316lb/ft
OPERATOR Bit hot,
 turbo smoking slightly.
REACTION Low on
 power as temp is hot.



7th JAMES BUCKENHAM | **306BHP** | ASTRA VXR



ENGINE Courtenay Stage 3 & Intercooler & tophat, Piper, Piercross
CLAIMED 307bhp
& 347lb/ft
OPERATOR Good.
Boost slightly too high.
REACTION Still fuelling nice, map spot on, very pleased.



6th CHRIS ELVIN | **310BHP** | ASTRA VXR NUR



ENGINE Rabbid Stage 3.5, Forge FMIC, EDS inlet, Piercross, water/meth injection + more
CLAIMED Don't know
ACTUAL 310bhp & 313lb/ft
OPERATOR Bit lean up to 5500rpm.
REACTION Very pleased.



5th ADAM FRANCIS | **311BHP** | ASTRA 888



ENGINE Stage 4, Piper, VXR turbo, AFM & injectors, Klassen inlet, Courtenay Intercooler,
CLAIMED 300bhp
ACTUAL 311bhp & 332lb/ft
OPERATOR Nice flat power curve.
REACTION More than I expected, really happy.



4th LES BROWN | **321BHP** | VECTRA VXR



ENGINE Stage 2+, Insignia turbo, large water rad
CLAIMED 330bhp
ACTUAL 321bhp & 362lb/ft
OPERATOR Clutch slip so torque figure low.
REACTION About what I expected, so very happy.



3rd JASON ANTHONY | **325BHP** | ASTRA VXR



ENGINE Steel rods, Stage 3, Ko6, Klasen inlet, high flow fuel pump, Courtenay cooler, Piper exhaust
CLAIMED 326.6bhp
ACTUAL 325bhp & 328lb/ft
OPERATOR Clutch slip.
REACTION Happy, but need new clutch!



2nd SCOTT BUNTING | 338BHP | ASTRA VXR



ENGINE Courtenay Stage 4, Klasen inlet, Ko6, Piper, FMIC, steel rods, CDTi airbox
CLAIMED 320bhp
ACTUAL 338bhp & 321lb/ft
OPERATOR Good, but leaning at high rpm.
REACTION Better than I expected.



1st DARREN WHITE | 377BHP | VXR8



ENGINE Walkinshaw exhaust, sports cat, air filter
CLAIMED 400bhp
ACTUAL 377bhp & 364lb/ft
OPERATOR Good power.
REACTION Happy, expected a little more though.



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RWD ASTRA



FAST FACTS

- ★ C20Xe with Suzuki GSX-R throttle bodies
- ★ RWD Ford Type 9 gearbox
- ★ Bilstein coilovers
- ★ Arctic White respray with extensive underfloor modifications

DECEPTION

This is no ordinary Mk1 Astra, this is a first rate, lightweight, RWD, XE-powered sleeper!

WORDS AND PHOTOS Jon Cass



We all know one of the first rules of designing and building a track car is to keep it as light as possible as that all important power to weight ratio is king. That's if you want to be one of the quickest cars out there, which let's face it we all do really. There's also a common desire to be quick enough to catch and pass much more expensive and exotic machinery in something no one would really expect to see other than in Tesco's car park or a classic car rally. We're talking sleepers here and that increasingly popular niche of retro sleepers in particular, the shells may be older, but they're much lighter than anything built from the past decade or so. Find a good one and with a bit of imagination the potential is there to fill the mirrors of factory cars costing the same as a small island.

Andy Griggs was thinking along these lines when he began his latest project, which, incredibly given the end result, was his first foray into building something suitable for track days, "I've always been a huge Vauxhall fan," Andy smiles, "my first car



RWD ASTRA



I was a Mk1 Astra 1300S which I managed to buy from my Dad's work for £300 in 1987," that was quite a steal even then! He's since owned numerous Chevettes, Mantas and the odd blue oval badged car of the same era, namely Sierras and Capris. "Most of these were modified in some way," Andy explains, "when I was in my late teens and early twenties I reconditioned engines as a full time job, so I often tinkered with my own cars in my spare time."

COLLECTORS ITEM

Over the past five years, Andy has managed to own not one but five Mk1 Astras which is no mean feat considering how thin on the ground they are now, "I'm constantly looking online for them," he laughs. This latest project would soon become a little more extreme than anything he'd previously undertaken, though it had been an ambition, and in the planning

stages for the past decade. "I've always liked Mk1 Astras as you can tell, but I'm also a fan of rear wheel drive cars too so the perfect combination for me would be to build a RWD Astra!" Andy explains.

A suitable 1983 1.3S 3 door candidate was sourced. It had never seen a welder in its life, "it was almost too tidy to start messing with," Andy recalls, "but the big end went on the engine so that was the perfect excuse to use it for the conversion." As is so often the case with front to rear wheel drive conversions, Ford parts were used, Andy being familiar with 70's and 80's Fords anyway. "I bought all the necessary components from a Capri fan in Romford Essex, he played an extra in Eastenders so that made for an interesting day out!" Andy laughs.

Modifying the front end was fairly straightforward we're told, the bulkhead being chopped and moved back, strut tops lowered



"IT'S PASSING CARS IT REALLY SHOULDN'T BE PASSING ON TRACK"





A curious hybrid of Alfa calipers and Focus ST discs



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

2.0 C20XE, ported head, Suzuki GSX-R 1000 throttle bodies, MBE ignition/ECU, Rolling road map, Factory Mk1 Astra exhaust fabricated to fit RWD chassis, Sytech fuel pump, fuel pressure regulator, battery relocated to boot, rear mounted alloy fuel tank

POWER

165bhp

TRANSMISSION

Ford Type 9 5 speed box with modified bellhousing, 2.8i Capri 3.75 ratio welded diff, Capri gearbox tunnel

SUSPENSION

Bilstein adjustable coilovers, strut tops lowered, 8mm spacers

BRAKES

Alfa 156 front 4 pot calipers with Focus ST discs and fabricated brackets, Comp Brake bias pedal box

WHEELS & TYRES

8x15in Minilite-style wheels with Avon tyres

INTERIOR

Corsa PAS, boot floor raised 3in, front bulkhead moved back, fuel filler cap relocated into rear vent using Teflon coated braided hoses, Cobra Monaco seats, OMP snap-off steering wheel, floor raised under pedals

EXTERIOR

1983 1.3S Astra 3dr shell resprayed in Arctic White

THANKS

Miles Cartwright for moral support

A very neat touch indeed



RWD ASTRA

Fuel tank and pump now live onboard



and a fabricated subframe needed to mount the soon-to-be-installed bigger powerplant. The rear was more time consuming and took two full days with a digital spirit level to ensure everything would be lined up correctly. The boot floor had to be raised three inches and the spare wheel well removed to clear the Capri 3.75 welded diff and five linked rear axle. Andy then had a suitable prop shaft custom made which is connected to a Ford Type 9 five-speed gearbox with modified bell housing, again to aid clearance. This sits under a Capri tunnel fabricated into the Astra's floor. "I managed to buy the gearbox and engine at the same time from a local Land Rover specialist, they said it was destined to go in a kit car, but the project had been abandoned for some reason," explains Andy. The engine itself keeps it in the Vauxhall family and is the faithful Redtop from a Calibra, now with ported head, Suzuki GSX-R 1000 throttle bodies and an MBE ECU. "Frustratingly the big end went again

the first time I drove it so I had to carry out a full rebuild," Andy adds. This current engine specification is good for 165bhp, which may not be much compared with today's 300bhp hot hatches, but in such a lightweight shell it's more than adequate.

PARTS BIN WARRIOR

As the Astra was destined for track use, the suspension and brakes have also seen a major upgrade. Bilstein coilovers with adjustable spring heights are fitted all round while Andy returned to the Ford parts bin for the Focus ST front discs. "I wanted to use the biggest brakes available to sit behind a 15in wheel," Andy tells us, Alfa 156 Twin Spark 4 pot calipers with home fabricated brackets do the trick, though 8mm spacers were needed to clear the 8x15in motorsport themed Minilite copies. Andy has also added Corsa power steering which makes everyday driving and manoeuvring easier, though we suspect much of that will be happening in the paddock or pit lane!



Other than the dash and doorcards not much OE kit remains



The interior of the Astra had already seen some major changes with the Capri gearbox tunnel, raised boot floor and the front driver's side floor section also raised to house the bias pedal box, and the remainder would be virtually stripped out to save weight. In place of the old cloth interior, there's now a pair of Cobra Monaco bucket seats, a pop-off OMP steering wheel and an alloy fuel tank with Sytech fuel pump and

Wheels aside this is
one hell of a sleeper



"I'VE ALWAYS LIKED MK1 ASTRAS, BUT
I'M ALSO A FAN OF RWD CARS TOO SO
IT'S THE PERFECT COMBINATION FOR ME"



MBE ECU is
very accessible



RWD ASTRA

Powerslides are easy to provoke with RWD and not a great deal of weight



pressure regulator sitting in the rear. Some of the Mk1's original features have been retained, the dash and door cards which are now satin black and the floor has been repainted a more practical dark grey. "I'll probably add a cage and harnesses next year," Andy adds, "but I like how it is now so there's no immediate rush."

SLEEPING SOFTLY

The current lack of roll cage also adds to the Mk1's understated exterior. There's only the wheels to give the game away as to this car's true

intentions, unless you take a good look underneath or through the windows obviously! The simple, clean, and angular lines of the Astra are shown to their fullest, with the immaculate Arctic White paint prepped by Andy and sprayed by SRG bodywork being totally flawless. The subtle filler cap relocated into the rear vent doesn't detract from Andy's intended look either. In many ways it's too nice to be throwing around a circuit! But that would defy the whole point of this project and the Astra has caused some raised eyebrows on track so far, "It's passing

cars it really shouldn't be passing," Andy grins. It's not as though he's had much practice at trackdays either, other than enthusiastic road driving, but having witnessed Andy holding the Mk1 in a perfect drift, it's obvious he can handle a car like this and no mistake!

What's even more incredible is the whole build took just ten months in Andy's spare time from start to finish. There may not be that many surviving Mk1 Astras around now, but this example must surely be an inspiration to anyone thinking about building a retro track car! ○



OWNER ANDY GRIGG

AGE 44
OCCUPATION Car mechanic
FAVOURITE MOD Moving petrol cap into rear vent
FAVOURITE VAUXHALL Mk1 Astra!

The Mk1 is such a rare sight on our roads these days, which is a real shame



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ZAFIRA VXR



FAST FACTS

- ★ Z20LEH with Wossner forged pistons
- ★ Garrett GTX3071R with Tial .60 housing
- ★ M32 with Gripper LSD
- ★ KW V3 Coilovers
- ★ 8x19in Insignia VXR alloys



Insignia VXR 19s are a straight swap and suit the Zafira perfectly

RAPID TRANSPORT

We take a close look at one of the most bonkers Vauxhalls in the UK, a Zafira VXR with room for a large family and enough power to make Porsche owners blush! **WORDS** Jarkle **PHOTOS** Chris Wallbank

The Zafira VXR perhaps represents the high water mark of Vauxhall's early 2000's lunacy, a point in time where this traditionally ultra-conservative, highly controlled (from the bigwigs over at GM HQ in Detroit) company decided, 'sod it, let's VXR every model in our range!' The GSi badged model that preceded it certainly made headlines at launch and Vauxhall evidently relished being able to claim they sold the world's most powerful people carrier, but it's the less well known VXR model that came next that truly took things to another level. Taking the running gear from the Astra VXR and flinging it at

the bodyshell of the all-new Zafira really shouldn't have worked, particularly as buying one new was a serious financial investment, but the results were spectacular – 240bhp is impressive enough today, back in 2005 it must've seemed certifiable!

If there's one thing we know and love about the UK's Vauxhall scene it's the fact that everyone involved can't leave well enough alone, and if it came with a Griffin badge on the front, chances are it'll have been tweaked and tuned at some point. The Zafira VXR was no different, and within months a number of tuners were offering re-map packages, helped along thanks to the car's shared VXR powerplant. The example we have here is the culmination of all this; a

500bhp+ monster of a people carrier, a car that's every bit as capable of blasting down the Autobahn at three-figure speeds as it is hauling a family to the seaside. Owned and built by Ian Waterfield over the course of two intensive years it can stake a claim to being among the most powerful Zafiras in the UK, being denied the top-spot by the car of friend and fellow Vauxhall nut, Aaron McCann.

RAPID DECISION

"I was looking at buying an Audi Q7 at the time, something I could use to transport the family in," Ian recalls. "By the time I got back to the dealer it'd sold though, so I decided to have a look at the Vauxhall. It wasn't my first choice, but I quickly fell for it."

A previous history of Vauxhall ownership had left Ian with an impressive stock of Z20LET and LEH parts, all of which were temptingly gathering dust in his workshop. It was simply too much to resist, and within weeks the modifications started to flow – mere months after signing his name on the V5, Ian had a Stage 3 Zafira VXR good for 304bhp. It's here that the issues began to arise, firstly when the turbo seals decided they didn't fancy sealing anymore, eventually rendering the OE K04 fit for the scrap heap. The next logical step up was a Garrett, Ian eventually selecting the ever popular GTX3071R and pairing it with a Tial 44mm external wastegate and MOK (Michael O'Keefe) tubular manifold.



That's a whole lot of power in an unassuming package

“It was off the road for a bit while I gathered the parts needed, and then I took it to a tuner for a mapping session,” Ian explains. “I came back and asked how it’d performed on the dyno and they said they didn’t have one and that they’d live mapped it instead.”

Alarm bells began to ring, particularly as there were no print outs to confirm any power gains, plus the fact that Ian himself could feel no difference in power. A trip to Trax represented an opportunity to get the Zafira on the rollers and to confirm Ian’s fears – the map really was at fault.

“It turned out to be making 265bhp – I could hardly believe it, particularly as I’d spent almost five figures on parts by that point!”

Instead Ian turned to Chris Wells at CC Tuning, and together they devised a

suitable map strategy for the sickly Zafira. A custom map was carefully drawn up and applied, the lean running issues that’d blighted the car for weeks were rooted out, and the Zafira was once again strapped to the rollers.

MAP READING

“We did five runs and carefully toggled the parameters each time, upping the boost slowly to make sure it was safe at all times. First we got it to 300bhp, then 428bhp... eventually we brought it

right up past 500bhp and slowly tweaked it from there.”

508.08hp and 397lbft at 27psi were the headline figures at the end of this, though at one point Ian saw 530bhp before opting to turn it down ever so slightly for the sake of reliability. We’re fairly used to discussing big power Vauxhalls in PV and have featured cars with larger numbers attached to them, but this much brute force in something primarily designed as a family conveyance really is amazing, hilarious

and just a little bit ridiculous.

“It’s not as challenging to drive as you might think, as I’ve had it set up for the boost to come in midway through the rev range; it’s quick, but not a torque-steery monster,” he laughs. “The kids like it as well...when I let them in it!”

Chassis upgrades have since come thick and fast, and it’s perhaps surprising how well you can make a Zafira handle with carefully considered, bolt-on upgrades. Now sprung on KW

“EVENTUALLY WE BROUGHT IT RIGHT UP PAST 500BHP AND SLOWLY TWEAKED IT FROM THERE”



Is there any modern Vauxhall that doesn't suit Insignia 19s?



V3 coilovers all round, the Zafira also benefits from those stunning 19in Insignia VXR alloys, plus a set of 20mm spacers bolted to the rear hubs. Alcon four-pot front calipers bite down on 345mm discs, with the performance fluid transported round the car via an extensive network of braided lines. This is precisely the kind of hardware that can transform an Astra VXR from a good handling car, into a great one, and it shouldn't be too much of a surprise that they're every bit as effective when bolted to the Astra's bigger brother.

There's no getting around the fact that, when new, the Zafira VXR was a pricey Vauxhall, certainly not a model that the firm anticipated selling that many of. That meant that they could afford to be generous with the VXR's spec and even today,



OWNER IAN WATERFIELD

AGE 33

OCCUPATION Industrial paints and coatings

FIRST VAUXHALL Nova GSi

WORST PART OF THE BUILD All those mapping issues were very frustrating.

BEST PART OF THE BUILD Just seeing it as a finished product and using it.

ZAFIRA VXR

Ian likes his creature comforts



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1998cc Z20LEH with Wossner 87mm forged pistons, PEC I-beam rods, 'wedged' block, ported and polished head, ARP head bolts and steel gasket, Piper high lift camshafts RnD adjustable pulleys, air-con delete kit and fuel loop mod, Garrett GTX3071R with Tial .60 housing and V-band, Tial MVR 44mm external wastegate, MOK custom equal length tubular manifold, 3in downpipe and Custom Performance 3in system, 90mm MAF with custom intake pipework and ram air filter, large FMIC and MOK solid boost pipes, EDS inlet manifold and enlarged top hat, Asnu 1050cc injectors, Stealth 340 fuel pump, Forge Motorsport hoses, Mocal 19 row oil cooler with braided lines

POWER

508.08hp and 397lb/ft

TRANSMISSION

Modified M32 six-speed gearbox with Gripper LSD, four-paddle clutch, Billet flywheel

SUSPENSION

KW V3 coilovers all round

BRAKES

Alcon four-pot calipers and 345mm discs, aftermarket pads, braided lines (front), stock setup with aftermarket pads and braided lines (rear)

WHEELS AND TYRES

8x19in Insignia VXR alloys all round, 235/35x19 Kenda tyres, 20mm rear spacers

INTERIOR

Zeitronic Zt-2 AFR meter and data logger, Vxmml head unit, all speakers upgraded to Vibe, screens in head rests

EXTERIOR

Zafira VXR with RS bonnet vents in grille, OPC grille, DW splitter, tinted rear lights, carbon fibre fog light grilles

THANKS

Chris Wells at CC Tuning for map, Tom Bowes at Bowes Vehicle Solution for rebuild, Michael Okeeffe at MOK



almost a decade since these cars rolled off the line, they're fully loaded and boast impressive kit. Adding too much aftermarket gear into the mix simply risks over-egging the pudding, so Ian's kept it simple; the interior is largely stock (bar some extra gauges and screens), while the exterior makes do with some RS vents, an OPC grille, DW splitter and a smattering of carbon fibre. It's a neat, understated way of styling a car that, powerplant-wise at least, is anything but.

WEIGHT WATCHER

Ian's accepted that he's probably taken things as far as he can engine-wise, though he's by no means done with the rest of the car. Adding lightness is very much the order of the day, with Ian currently speaking to various firms about some one-off carbon fibre panels for the doors, bonnet, boot and even the roof. Ceramic coatings for the exhaust have been mooted, along with the possibility of a bespoke inlet manifold, just to help the LEH breathe that bit better. Factor in the polybushes that will be on in a matter of weeks, and you're left with a massively capable car – and one that's still quite happy to pootle along and transport the family on holiday. ○



Like an Astra VXR on steroids. Lots of steroids!

**“THE BOOST COMES IN MIDWAY THROUGH THE REV RANGE;
IT’S QUICK, BUT IT’S NOT A TORQUE-STEERY MONSTER”**



Despite being a full-on performance car, Ian's wisely kept the interior standard



FITTING DAY AT COURTENAY SPORT

The winner of our competition in conjunction with Eibach was Leon Taylor. Here's how he got on having his new suspension fitted...

Back in June we ran our fantastic competition where the winner could win a full chassis makeover with products from the legendary suspension manufacturers Eibach with full fitting at renowned Vauxhall specialists Courtenay Sport. Well that lucky winner was Leon Taylor from Sevenoaks in Kent with his 2007 Astra H van. On hearing about his win Leon was over the moon, and after speaking to Eibach and going through the product list available for his vehicle, this only added to Leon's

elation! His final choice of prize was Eibach's height adjustable Pro-Street-S coilovers, 20mm Pro-Spacers for both the front and rear, and Pro-Alignment.

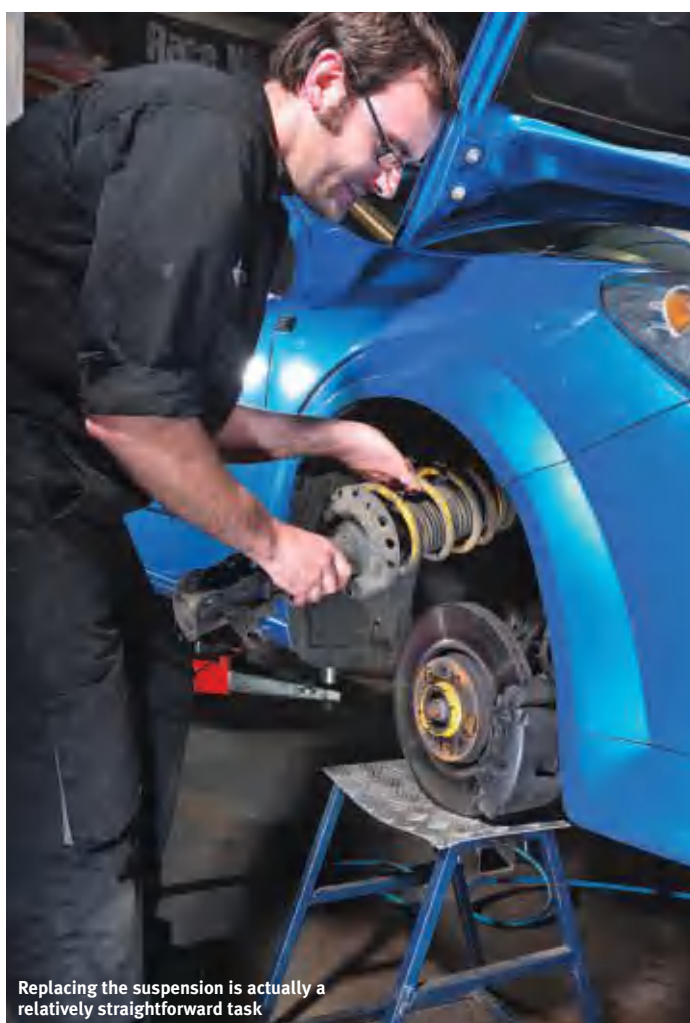
A date was set and it was early on a sunny October morning that everyone convened at Courtenay Sport in North Walsham, Norfolk. A very early start for most, but the start of what would be a very productive day. Courtenay Sport have over 30 years of Vauxhall experience both in the performance and the motorsport world. They have a great set up with their own workshop facilities where they can carry out anything from performance tuning

work, fitting any of their products, routine servicing, through to engine fault diagnosis, rolling road services in their own purpose built dyno cell and MoT testing. With a name synonymous with Vauxhall both nationally and internationally we have a feeling the Astra van is in safe hands.

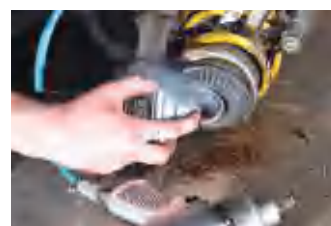
FIT FOR PURPOSE

Matt Woods the photographer got straight on with taking his 'before' shots so the Astra van could be taken inside and work could begin. Mark Ratcliffe, the technician working on the vehicle for the day was quick to get it up in the air and the wheels off.

Before we go any further with the fit, it's important to highlight why Leon was so pleased with his win. Previously he had bought lowering springs for the van via eBay, and they had done their job as the van sat low and 'stealth' like which was the look Leon was after, but unfortunately it handled horrendously. So he was already on the lookout for new suspension when he entered the competition. His problem escalated when a rear spring snapped in two places the week before the fitting day. Leon had to re-fit his original springs on the rear so he could drive his van to Norfolk, hence the raised rear end look in the 'before' pics! This problem



Replacing the suspension is actually a relatively straightforward task



happens more and more often, with companies like Eibach and Courtenay having to come to the rescue. It really is worth spending that extra bit of money on decent quality parts for important areas like the suspension, rather than trying to save a few pennies but then end up spending double when it all goes wrong. In this instance Leon had a lucky escape, both in the safety element – for if he had been driving at speed when the rear spring collapsed it could have been disastrous, and on his wallet with the timing of this bountiful win! Lecture over!!!

Back to the fitting, it is a very simple job to remove the suspension unit after the wheel is off, undo the drop link bolts, remove the pinch bolts at the bottom (after making sure the brake line is out of the way), then it's simply a case of undoing the plastic suspension clip holding the top of the damper unit in place in the engine bay. Mark removed the unit and secured it into his spring compressor so he could remove the top mount. He needed to do this as the rubber plate in the top mount is reused when fitting the new Eibach coilovers. A rusty top-mount bolt created a bit of work for Mark, but once it came free he could put the new Eibach coilover together.

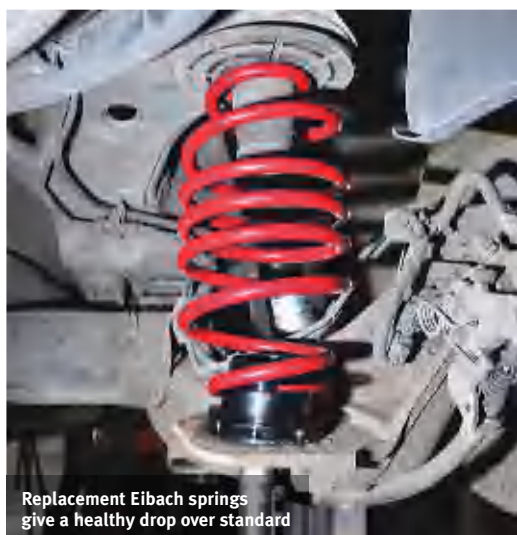
COMPETITION WINNER



Old and worn V new and shiny



It's wise to set the approximate height before fitting



Replacement Eibach springs give a healthy drop over standard



The Eibach Pro-Street-S kit is designed with the road going vehicle in mind, yet is of such a high build quality with stainless steel construction and precision damper units they are also a popular choice for the track, which is something Leon is hoping to do in the future. Ride height can be adjusted from anywhere between -30 and -60mm front and rear on the Astra van, so the ride height can be altered when at track side and then again to drive home, though we have a feeling Leon is looking to go as low as possible – permanently! Again the Eibach Pro-Street-S is perfect for this as the damper rates are computer matched with the springs at the Eibach factory, meaning once the desired ride height has been established the Pro-Street-S kit is a true 'fit and forget' option.

Next Mark set the height adjusters in the middle, the height can then be tweaked later once everything is back in place. While fitting the coilovers Mark used a very impressive bit of kit



Previously bought cheap springs had snapped!

FEEDBACK FROM LEON

"I am over the moon with the handling, it is a completely different vehicle! I used to hate bendy lanes due to the body roll but now I love them. The drive after was a totally different experience from what I was used to it didn't feel like the same van, or even a van for that matter! The ride was firm but the excellent dampers did a great job of soaking up the bumps so I could hack it round the windy lanes in comfort. I literally couldn't find the limit of grip it just kept on sticking! The suspension is great and I will never go for cheap coilovers in the future."



20mm spacers will improve both the handling and the looks

which on explanation Mark shows how it holds the strut top securely, whilst tightening the top retaining nut. The tool prevents the internals of the damper from spinning, which will otherwise cause irreparable damage to the internal damper mechanism. Having spent many hours hanging about in garages it is always interesting to spot new tools. And very useful it proves too! Once the shiny new Eibach parts are back in place Mark returned everything else back in place and moved onto the other side.

BREAK TIME

Again it's a rusty top mount bolt that held things up initially but things went smoothly from then on. So with front done it was time for a tea break!

Work on the rear began, with not even a rusty bolt to hold things up so it was a straightforward job for Mark swapping the suspension units over – probably helped by the fact Leon had to take them off the week before to replace the broken spring. Once all the

new Eibach parts were in place Mark rubbed down the surface of the wheel hubs ready for the new Pro-Spacers. Leon opted for 20mm spacers all round, pushing his wheels out slightly but totally filling the arches with his 3SDM wheels. Catching a big smile on Leon's face we have a feeling he is happy with the results! Mark brought the van down off the ramp to see how it was sitting.

After a couple of adjustments (lower then lower again) Leon was happy with the ride height and Mark was able to take it out for a test drive to check for any knocks, rattles and rolls. Once Mark was happy with everything – he had a quick diagnostic check on an ABS light and pumped a tyre up that wasn't as full as he wanted – then Leon was free to go and try out his new fantastic new suspension. ○

Thanks to Courtenay Sport
www.courtenaysport.co.uk

**Next
issue**
Setting the
geometry at
A Reeve
Performance



VAUX TECH

Buy & modify

ASTRA GTE 16V

One of Vauxhall's most iconic performance models, here's all you need to know if you're thinking of buying an Astra GTE.

Launched in 1988, the Mk2 Astra GTE 16V has gone on to become one of the most iconic performance cars Vauxhall has ever made. The main reason for this is the superb 156bhp 20XE engine, which made it the most powerful of all the naturally aspirated hot hatches of the time. Renowned motoring journalist LJK Setright wrote in 1989 'the astonishing eagerness with which it goes will probably still be discussed in later decades.' He was right. Even over a quarter of a century later, the GTE can still cut it.

Many GTEs led a hard life, being neglected or thrashed to destruction,



and large numbers were scrapped for their engines. There are still examples out there, but they're becoming more sought after with each passing year. Here's everything that you need to know about buying and getting the best from what many consider to be the ultimate Astra.



BUYING AN ASTRA GTE 16V

■ MODEL INFORMATION

When launched in 1984, the new Mk2 Astra GTE carried over the 18e 1.8 8-valve fuel injected engine from the Mk1 GTE, but used a closer ratio gearbox. Early GTEs were available in three and five door form, until 1987 when the GTE received an engine upgrade (2.0 8-valve 20SE, 124 bhp) and the SRi was launched with the 1.8 engine. Early 1.8 (B/C/D reg) cars had 236mm vented front brake discs, wheel trims as standard, grey Mosaic seat fabric and no foglights. These early Mk2s are arguably rarer than the Mk1, so one in original condition may be a collectors item.

The 2.0 cars received 256mm front disc brakes, alloy wheels, foglights and a tilt/slide sunroof as standard along with a new Laser seat fabric.

Power steering was an option until January 1988 when it was made standard. The 16V arrived on the E-plate and had improved ATE calipers, twin exhaust pipes, rear disc brakes, lowered and stiffened springs, a bigger front anti-roll bar, twin rear anti-roll bars, increased negative camber on the rear wheels, and a different floorpan to allow for the gear lever linkage to pass through the bulkhead. On the inside, the 16V had a leather steering wheel and a shorter gear lever than other models of Mk2. The model was facelifted again in 1989 (G-reg), with new Rainbow cloth seat trim and a new steering wheel. ABS became standard in January 1990. A catalytic converter was fitted to 1991 model year cars.

■ IDENTIFYING A GTE 16V

It is possible that a lesser model has been fitted with 16V parts. The easiest way to check is look inside at the gear lever and centre console; this is unique to the 16V, and shorter than other models. The VIN plate is located on the front panel, while the chassis number is stamped into the floor down beside the driver's seat. Check that the numbers on the V5 logbook match those on the car! If in doubt, get a HPI check done.



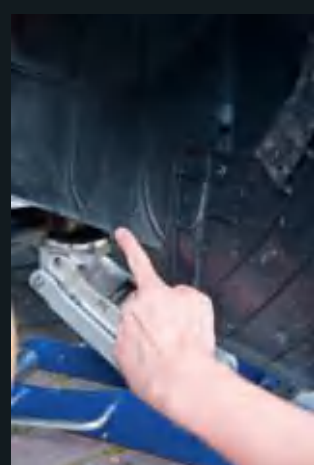
One way of identifying a GTE 16V is by the short gear lever



■ GENERAL

A GTE 16V is a practical, economical, easy to live with car that is capable of racking up big mileage without problems through the week and equally able to put a grin on your face every time you need to nip out to overtake dawdling traffic. They're surprisingly comfortable too, providing it hasn't been fitted with very hard suspension or a blaring exhaust. Of course, many cars will have worn suspension components and poor quality tyres so take this into account on a test drive. It is truly astonishing the difference some fresh rubber and service items can make to one of these cars.

Rust, lack of maintenance and poor modification are the two biggest issues. Even the last GTE is well over 20 years old now, so it's likely to have had some welding work, which isn't a problem as long



as it's been done properly. Also, be wary of heavily thrashed examples that are passed off as 'mint'. Even the infamous XE can only take so much abuse. Equally, don't discount a car that has a lot of miles on the clock. We've seen cars showing 200,000 miles on the clock that run perfectly thanks to regular care and maintenance. Finally, beware of broken or missing trim, as some parts are very hard to find.



MECHANICAL

The running gear on a GTE 16V is as tough as nails, which is great, but it also means they're a prime candidate for sustained abuse. The hydraulic lifters can tap from cold, which isn't a problem as long as they quieten down after a reasonable period. The cam belt should be changed every 36,000 miles or three years, which also includes the rollers. If in doubt, get a kit fitted asap including a water pump while you're there – if the belt goes, it'll bend the valves. Look for excessive blue smoke on start up and when warm, which will indicate a well worn engine. Oil changes are recommended at 9000 miles, but we say that it's the cheapest form of preventative maintenance and ideally you should do it every 5000.

High idle, or a refusal to idle when warm can be traced to the idle control valve. Poor starting and rubbish fuel economy is often a result of a failed coolant temp sensor. Airflow meters, fuel pump relays and crank sensors can play up too. Check the earth straps too because they can perish and cause all sorts of running issues.

The F20 gearbox is well suited to the XE engine and shouldn't give any problems. Some fresh gear oil when you come to service the car is a good idea though. A slack gearshift can be transformed by either fitting a new linkage, or adding some washers to take the play out. Turn the car from lock to lock at low speed and listen for CV joints clicking and listen for

any wheel bearing noises. Also check the strut top mountings inside the engine bay as they often wear out. They're not that expensive to replace however.

If the car is fitted with ABS, make sure the system works as it should – does the check light come on and then go out shortly after the car has started? Also ensure the light does not come on during a test drive. Problems are likely to be a faulty sensor or a broken/dirty ABS ring.

Finally, the cylinder head. First examples of the 16V engine featured a cylinder head made by Cosworth. A Coscast head will have the name stamped on the outlet manifold side of the head below port number two plus there is no core plug on the distributor side of the block. You can check which year the engine was made by removing the oil filler cap and looking at the circled number stamped into the cam cap below eg: '89' is 1990 and so on. In about 1989, the contract for producing the heads was given to Kolbenschmidt in Germany who reduced the inlet valve guide down to 11mm from 13mm. An oilway is known to crack on the later heads and go porous, with the Coscast items believed to be more reliable, but a porous head is simple to fix these days.

A catalytic converter was added to the 16V engine in 1991. These engines were marked 'C20XE' prefix and featured a different ECU with exhaust lambda sensor, as opposed to the earlier '20XE' prefix type.

The XE is still awesome and is a tough engine



BODY

Rust is the Mk2's achilles heel so budget accordingly and make sure you investigate any potential purchase thoroughly. Rear arches, sills, behind the rear bumper, bottom of the doors and around the base of where the spoiler fixes to the boot are all common rust spots.

Brown stains at the bottom of the A pillar are a sure sign rusty water is leaking out because the drainage holes on the underside of the doors are blocked. Leaking sunroofs can be caused by blocked drain holes, which run down the A pillar, but are normally cleared with a jet of water. The front wings also rust, as does the metal behind the headlights plus the boot floor should be checked for any corrosion.

Split bulkheads are another common fault on the Mk2 and can be identified by excess movement in the steering column and pedals. It splits around a box section on the offside where the steering rack bolts to the bulkhead. Have someone turn the steering wheel while you look down into this area. Make sure just the steering arms move and not the rack.



While it can be fixed with several engine parts removed, taking the lump out completely makes the job easier and means the rest of the bay's condition can be checked. Mk2s with a cracked bulkhead are in a dangerous condition and should not be driven.

The GTE comes with sideskirts as standard and rust can run riot behind these – we've seen entire sills pulled off along with the skirt. If the seller is OK with it, ideally you want to remove the skirts. They should be held on with plastic clips, which in turn are mounted on rivets. If the skirts are

screwed or glued on, the car will have had replacement sills. This doesn't mean dismissing a car, but look closely at the quality of work. Were the old sills cut off or are they still rotting under the new metal?

The rear chassis legs and spring seats can rot out, have a good look in this area and beware of caked on underseal – what might it be hiding? The GTEs were, and still are, prone to being nicked, so make sure there is no damage to the locks, that the one key fits everything and all the paperwork is in order.

Be wary of bodged bodywork such as new rear arches stuck on top of rusty old ones and signs of filler as well, due to the Mk2 Astra's penchant for rusting and many ending up in ditches. If the panel gaps are not straight, start asking questions. Some panels are still available online (sills, wings, door skins etc) but some, such as floor pans and crossmembers are becoming harder to source, so expect to have to trawl websites, autojumbles and breakers' yards for parts.

Considering its age, it's worth checking underneath...

...for signs of rot and to see if it's had any welding done

STEERING AND SUSPENSION

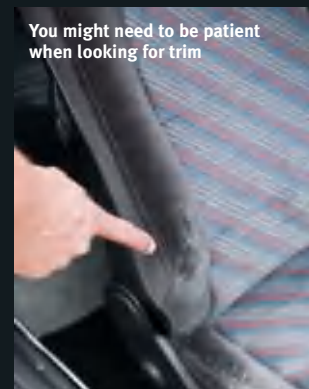
The GTE trim is generally hard wearing but the odd squeak and rattle is to be expected. It's common to find worn/collapsed bolsters on the driver's seat. Finding a replacement may take some time, and you may have to buy a complete set of trim as buyers are often unwilling to split. The later Rainbow trim came in two colours; grey (which is more like beige) and anthracite (black). The grey trim is prone to discolouring and is less popular than the anthracite. Examples of both of these, plus the earlier Laser trim do turn up on the Astra-Mk2 forum, eBay and other places, but they're getting rarer and more expensive all the time so be prepared to be patient. If

your carpet is in need of replacing though, one from a Daewoo Nexia will fit.

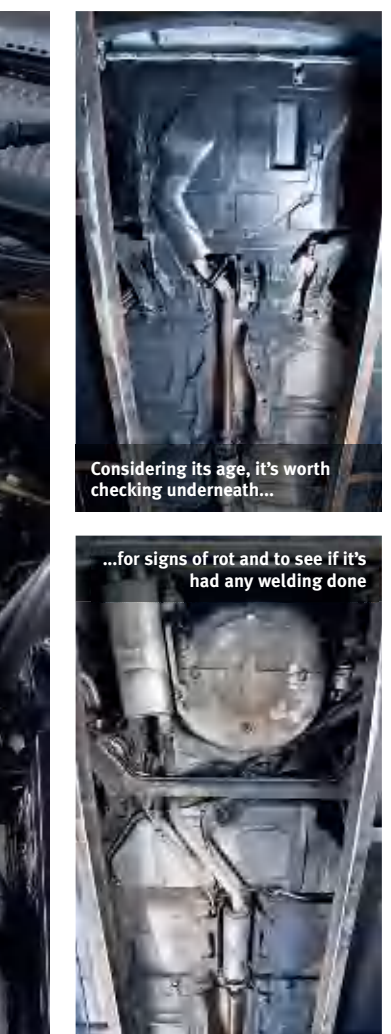
The GTE came with a digital dash as standard, so check that all works as it should (there's no reason why it shouldn't, they're generally reliable). There is also the check control panel in the middle of the dash. Does it all light up and do the lights go out once the car is running? Also check the usual things such as the electric windows and mirrors, heater fan and ventilation controls and switch gear. A very, very rare option is that of a trip computer, which is located where the clock usually is. Vents sometimes whistle, although remedies are available on www.astra-mk2.com.

Check the top seatbelt mount as

You might need to be patient when looking for trim



well for cracks. Any cracks means that it's taken the driver's weight at some time and could have been involved in an accident.



CHAMPION EDITION

Although never officially called the Champion, it's what the flagship GTE has become known as by pretty much the entire Vauxhall community. Only 250 were made and they're identified by Bordeaux Red paint, Connolly leather, cross-spoke 15in alloys and stickers – grey, yellow, red and blue, (although not all dealers put them on). The VIN plate should have either, 636, 651 or 656 next to the colour code as these were the numbers for leather trim.

Expect to pay a premium over a standard Astra GTE, but don't go mad, they're not worth a lot more. Modifying them is a contentious point, with many enthusiasts insisting they be kept standard. Ultimately it's your call, but the common sense approach would be to only fit reversible mods just in case the next owner values standard over modified.



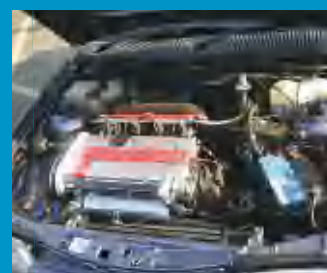
BUYING

WHAT'S OUT THERE TO BUY

A decent GTE 16V will cost anything from £2000 upwards. Cheaper cars do turn up from time to time, but, unless you get really lucky, it will be in need of work – probably lots of. There are also some massively expensive cars around too. Ultimately they're worth what

someone is willing to pay for them, so you be the judge of what you're prepared to pay. If you're looking for a project to keep, a car with a good shell but a knackered engine is far more desirable than a rot box that goes like the clappers; mechanical work is much

more straightforward than repairing rust for most people. There are of course a lot of modified cars around and the price really depends on the specification and condition. There are never that many for sale at any one time, as owners like to hang on to them – but here's a selection we found:



Carandclassic.co.uk **£14,995**

1990, full strip down to bare shell and restored to a very high standard over two years. New wings, sills etc and a full professional respray.

Engine was fully rebuilt by Noble Motorsport producing 216bhp at 7600rpm, Bilstein suspension, Hi Spec brakes, Compomotive wheels, 113,370 miles.





The limited edition GTE Champion features Connolly leather seats

MODIFYING AN ASTRA GTE 16V

SUSPENSION

The GTE 16V has such a great engine that you arguably don't need to touch it, but the handling leaves a lot to be desired, especially by modern standards. Replacing worn shocks with new OEM items will make a big difference when matched to slightly stiffer springs, while full kits from the likes of Bilstein or AVO will totally transform the car. Don't bother with budget suspension kits, they'll just make the car low with crashy

suspension. Front and rear strut braces are available.

Don't neglect the bushes and mounts; new OEM strut tops, track rod ends, balljoints and wishbone bushes will all combine to make the car feel much tighter. If you don't mind a harder ride, a full range of poly bushes are available. The Mk2 has a big heritage as a rally car, so there's a vast amount of things you can do to improve the handling.



MODIFYING

BRAKES

Very early GTE 16Vs used Delco calipers, upgrading these to later ATE versions will improve things. With discs all round, the standard setup works OK, but if you want to do track work etc, then you'll definitely need to think about upgrading. Braided hoses, and uprated pads and discs

work well if you want to keep the 14in wheels, but if you upgrade to 15s, then the calipers from a Cavalier/Calibra Turbo or Vectra V6 will fit straight on, and there is a variety of options for discs – not too expensive and well worth doing to upgrade your stopping power.



gumtree.com £2,995
1990, 4 former keepers, metallic black, FSH, bodywork good, arches ok, standard apart from exhaust, Powercap and K&N filter, drives spot on, much loved car



migweb.co.uk £4,500
1991 (J) Rare Silk Violet, 112,000 miles, Escort Cosworth seats fitted, arches/sills floors/bulkhead are very very good, oil changed every thousand miles in my ownership, alloy twin core radiator, BBS RX alloys, loads of history, Digi Dash that works!



gumtree.com £5,499
Recently been fitted with a rebuilt C20LET, new front discs and pads, F20 gearbox with new clutch, no rust apart from a few small bubbles on the arches and a bit on the front right
Cost 6.5k to build, Everything works as it should and the car has just given 2000 totally reliable miles. Very reluctant sale due to new job



Carandclassic.co.uk £3,300
1990, 131,000 miles, very well looked after, loads of receipts, electric windows stick, Speedo has currently stopped working, full rebuild, respray, Waxoiled and painted underneath, OMP Strut Brace, Courtenay flywheel, Speedline Alessio alloys, has to be seen to be appreciated.



MODIFYING

TRANSMISSION

The F20 gearbox ratios are the perfect complement to the XE's power, but there is one thing missing: a limited slip differential. Ford fitted one to the Escort RS Turbo and if Vauxhall had followed

suit with the GTE, they could have had a real legend on their hands. If you want the best from your GTE, fit a Quaife diff – it completely transforms the way the car delivers power to the road.

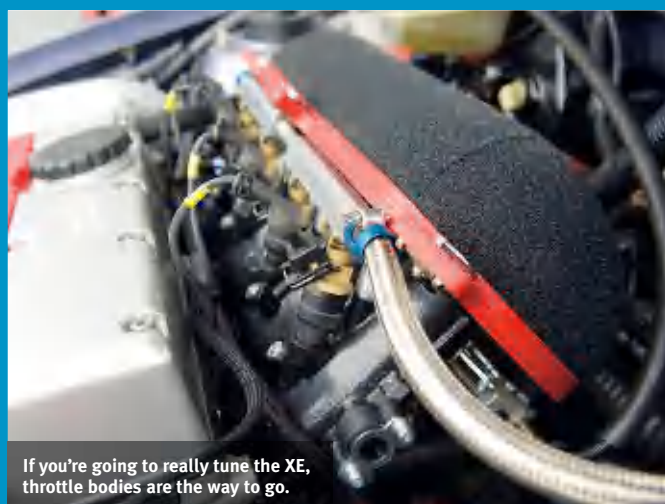
ENGINE

The awesome thing about a GTE 16V is that in comparison to many of its turbo rivals, you could jump in a GTE every morning, rag it to death and it'd just take it. What we're saying is, as long as the engine is healthy, your money is better spent on the driveline as opposed to the engine itself. The XE has almost limitless potential, and there is of course the option of swapping the engine and gearbox for a C20LET turbo and F28 six-speed setup, or one of the increasingly popular Saab power plants.

In this instance, we'll simply cover basic options. First off, if your car has a catalyst, bin it; it doesn't need it for the MoT anyway. The standard GTE exhaust system isn't bad however the manifold is restrictive, and worth replacing with one from the likes of Ashley. Magnex used to do an excellent stainless item if you can find one. A replacement panel filter is the best option in terms of induction, while Piper fast road cams timed in on Vernier pulleys are worth up to 10bhp. You can also 'derestrict' the throttle body by removing the wedge – there are guides online. The debate is open on the benefits of 'chipping' the ECU. Head work can be beneficial if the time comes when you need to remove it, but unless you want to go to the next level of throttle bodies, don't bother.



It's well worth replacing the restrictive standard exhaust manifold.

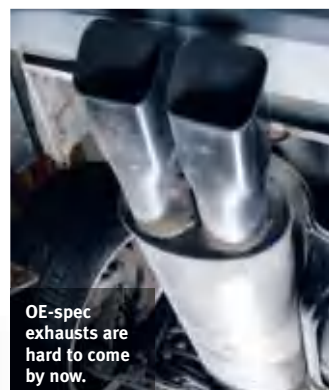


If you're going to really tune the XE, throttle bodies are the way to go.

WHEELS & TYRES

The GTE 16V is generally considered to suffer from wheels and tyres that are too small. Again, while Ford fitted large (at the time) 15in wheels as far back as 1983 on their RS 1600, Vauxhall persisted with 14in wheels and skinny 185/65 tyres. Swap to a set of 15in Vauxhall wheels and 195/50 tyres and then wonder why on earth they didn't do this from the start. 16s will also fit quite happily although you may need to modify the rear arches depending on the tyre size and offset. Don't bother with 17s.

Put on a set of 15in wheels for an instant improvement.



OE-spec exhausts are hard to come by now.



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WINTER WARMER

@ I'm thinking about starting a winter project to get my hand back in with Vauxhalls. I had loads when I was younger and so I quite fancy reliving my youth! I've bought a tidy Corsa Spin with a 1.0 engine and my plan is to fit a C20XE,

suspension, 15in wheels and leave it looking rather subtle. When I say the plan is... I mean, that's the theory as I'm finding it almost impossible to source even the basics. When I was doing this the first time round, stuff was ten-a-penny! Where did it all go

and given this apparent drought, what's the alternative? Thanks, John.

A You're not alone John and it seems that the past few years, the lack of readily available 'old

school' parts has become a very real issue. Not long ago C20XE engines were fairly common and amazingly all had a "genuine" 80,000 miles on them. Now, even finding one for sale is a mission and the costs have rocketed... must be that "full service history" they all have. I guess we have to bear in mind the last XE rolled off the line nigh on 20 years ago and with numbers dwindling, those who have them, like a lot of retro parts... won't let go. Or, they want a small fortune.

There are always alternatives. We've already seen several 90's cars running Corsa and Astra VXR engines and the Saab thing continues to gather pace although the old B204 lumps are starting to get a bit thin on the ground too. The X20XEV is an option as is the X16XE from the Tigra (whole cars are cheap!) but whatever you decide, we'd budget for a rebuild kit as there's one thing you can bank on... the amount of 80,000 miles examples out there could be counted on one hand! If it was us and we were conscious of cost, we'd be sourcing an X16XE as they go straight in and, with minimal modifications, can easily give a standard C20XE a serious fright.



Don't underestimate the ability of the X16XE if you can't find a useable C20XE

FUNNY RUNNER

@ Hi, hope you can advise. I bought a Corsa VXR about a month ago, totally standard and with 60,000 miles on the clock. It's been great but a couple of days ago it started to run a bit funny, like the engine was juddering and the engine warning light was coming on. The light then started staying on constantly and the car feels like the turbo isn't working when I accelerate. There's a kind of whooshing noise when I accelerate so I think the turbo does work but it just doesn't go very well. The car has a warranty but the garage say I have to pay to get it diagnosed and that it might not be covered and have told me a turbo is almost £1000. Help please! Kirsty.

A We get asked this sort of thing frequently and our advice is always have it diagnosed by a professional. Guessing or talking to the internet for advice can ultimately lead you on a wild goose chase.

While we don't dispute forums are outstanding for help and advice, with faults like this there are so many possible factors you really do need to get it looked at. To give you an idea it could be anything from a split boost or vacuum pipe to a melted piston or turbo failure and could be anything from a 25p hose clip to a £3k engine rebuild and anything in between.

A diagnostic check is inexpensive, sometimes free if you can find somebody with the equipment – a £3 Bluetooth dongle and a free phone app will even give you the fault code and an idea of what the cause of the issue may be, but you may need to enlist the services of an experienced person to pinpoint the exact issue. Most warranties won't cover

diagnostic time and a lot only cover mechanical failures and a percentage of the labour costs, hence always pays to read the small print. Perhaps pop a post on VXR Online and see if there are any locals who could read the codes or take a look for you. The internet is full of help, you just need to ask. But don't leave it – if it's fuelling related it could kill the car!



Diagnosing a fault is much easier if you can read the fault codes

KNOCKING SHOP

@ For the past couple of months I've been experiencing a weird knocking noise from the front of my Vectra VXR. It's been getting progressively worse recently and with the MoT looming, I feel I should try and get it sorted before it goes in. The noise seems to be from the passenger side and more prolific over speed bumps and uneven surfaces. I did let my local tyre place have a look when they changed the front tyres but they said the wishbone bushes and the track rod ends were fine. One thing I have noticed is that over rough surfaces, I can almost feel the noise through my heels. Appreciate that makes no sense but it's difficult to explain. Hope you can shed some light and it won't cost me a fortune! **Christopher.**

Vec Cs are prone to suspension creaks and groans



The Vectra C is prone to a few knocks and creaks as things get worn and tired and these can range from worn drop links, strut tops, ball joints, inner and outer steering joints, engine mounts and even the radiator pack mounts. The VXR with its low profile tyres tends to exaggerate noises which could be seen as a good thing as you can then resolve them before they get worse. Resolving said issues is sometimes rather challenging however.

It will either take a well trained ear on a test drive or the services of a flat ramp and a bit poking around. Despite the tyre place checking, it's worth bearing in mind that with the wheel

hanging down, certain worn parts can't be traced, for example the top mounts as they have the weight of the wheel etc hanging on them, which can pull components tightly together and thus there's no more play and no more noises. We wouldn't like to guess at the cause but the upside is the Vectra, like many other Vauxhalls, is relatively easy to work on and parts aren't ruinously expensive.

Xenon headlights are expensive to replace, but the lenses can be restored



LIGHTEN UP

@ I've got an Astra Turbo with the factory fitted Xenon headlights but they are very dull looking and the glass seems to be a sort of yellow colour. I've tried cleaning them and also tried to give them a polish with T-Cut but it hasn't made much of a difference. I was wondering if this can be fixed or if not, how much it would cost to have new lights fitted as the light they emit is really quite poor now. Thanks, **Henry.**

A Hi Henry. First up, without knowing how old the car is, we can't give specific figures but regardless of age, replacement Xenon

units are very expensive so we'd pretty much disregard that option for the time being. The good news however, dull and discoloured lenses can be improved fairly easily. Unlike older models, the Mk4 Astra onwards has plastic lenses and thus these can be carefully polished to remove the marks. Granted some marks are just too deep and if the plastic itself has turned milky, there's nothing can be done but assuming the discolouration and marks are on the surface, this can be addressed.

There are a few bespoke kits which consist of an abrasive polish and some applicators. T-Cut is no use and should be relocated to the nearest

bin. You can also use a cutting compound and a machine polisher but be aware that much like the paint work, over-enthusiasm and too much pressure or speed can actually burn the lights. One option is to use a fairly aggressive compound and with a low speed selected, slowly buff the lights and remove the marks. A finer compound will refine the finish and a good polish will help keep them clean. Some people have had good results with using increasingly fine wet & dry paper too. It's worth knowing that it won't last forever but once they've been done once, it's far easier to keep them clean. This applies to pretty much any car with plastic headlights.

Quick fixes

Q Guys, can I still buy new window seals for my Vauxhall Nova?

Dave

A Sadly the answer is no. We checked with a couple of suppliers and all threw up a blank. Best bet would be to source a set of decent second hand ones.

Q I bumped my Astra GSi last week and the bodyshop are going to use a pattern wing. Will this be ok or should I buy a new one?

Anon

A A pattern part is new, it's just not genuine GM. Some brands are fine but some are so thin you could shave with them. We'd rather use a good second hand part over a cheap pattern panel.

Q I've just change the distributor cap and rotor arm on my Cavalier SRi but it's misfiring now. Anything obvious I should check?

Keith

A Checking the leads are in the right order would be our suggestion. Simple way to avoid getting it wrong is to swap one at a time. Also check the contacts in the cap are all ok.

Q Hiya, clutch change on my Astra GSi 16v... is it a gearbox out job?

Simon

A If it's a Mk3 GSi with a C20XE and F20 box with a flat flywheel and lower inspection plate, you're onto a winner. Anything else... gearbox off. Good luck.



Q Can you advise me what the best brake pads would be for my 2010 Insignia SRi CDTi?

Mick

A If it's a standard car, we generally find Vauxhall pads to be the best option and reasonably priced. If you want to upgrade, have a look at the range of kits LMF Vauxhall sell. You're really only restricted by how deep your pockets are.



MAP READER

@ I've just finished building a Mk5 van but there are a few things I need to tie up. It's a 2007 model with a ZzoLEH, steel rods, high flow inlet, intercooler, exhaust and a GT turbo and so on. It's been mapped by a local lad and it's struggling to make decent figures. In fact, it's a total disappointment. It did 315bhp and just didn't seem to want to pull any harder and the lad pretty much shrugged his shoulders and said it was something that I'd done wrong. I'm gutted as I was hoping it'd crack 350bhp easily so any ideas on what to do? Cheers, Gavin.

A We'd be inclined to agree with you, 315bhp is far below what a good Garrett based set up can produce so there is something amiss. First, we'd perhaps question the mapping skills. Given the relatively poor results, we'd pretty much expect any mapper worth his salt to be able to look at the data and advise where the issue lies so with little feedback, we'd recommend a trip to a reputable dyno and have the van checked over and fairly urgently as there could be some serious fuelling issues that could cause lasting damage. Said issues could be down to a hardware issue or indeed, the software which is why we always preach that cheap 'custom' map outfits should best be avoided.

Beyond this it would be pure

speculation on our part but it's worth considering factors such as the air flow meter, lambda sensor, the 2.5bar map sensor may be maxing out (a 3 bar one with appropriate ECU adjustment would be better suited) and the injectors may be too big and in turn creating a very rich mixture. There are simply too many factors for us to be able to provide a definitive answer but we'd certainly expect figures pushing towards 400bhp using a GT2871RS or similar. There are numerous Vauxhall tuners out there, a quick Google search will soon reveal those who are well respected so we'll refrain from being specific but any will be able to diagnose, advise and hopefully round up those missing horses for you.

SENSOR SENSE

@ Morning! I'm in need of some advice and I know that some of your guys are quite at home with the older cars. I've just finished building a Chevette hatch which has been built to fast road / track standard so it's got a five link rear end, discs all round, it's fully poly bushed and I popped a cage in for good measure. Now, it did have the standard 1256cc engine which I toyed with tuning up just to remain true to

the original design but in my wisdom, I've fitted a CzoXE and it's turned out to be a bit of a mistake. The engine is in, it runs and she goes well but only about 3000rpm and on fairly aggressive throttle inputs. I've been through everything – air flow meter, coolant temp sensor, timing, I even swapped the ECU and the issue remains. Appreciate you don't have the miracle answer but I'm hoping one of your guys may have had similar

problems and could offer some advice. Thanks lads. Terry.

A Sounds like an interesting, if a little frustrating project! We asked our resident 90's kid to put down his Gameboy, tie his Air Max and take a look. We don't have the miracle answer, but if you've covered the basics and based on the symptoms, a couple of common suggestions were made which were the engine speed sensors (e.g., cam / hall sensor and crank sensor) and also the throttle position sensor. The latter of which is always one worth checking as it can give all sorts of odd issues and would explain why the car is kicking into life with the throttle at a certain point and above. Check the sensor isn't loose first of all and listen for it clicking when the throttle just starts to open. If in doubt, swap it.



Quick fixes

Q Hi lads, I've been told I'll need to get the camber checked on my Mk4 Astra if I lower it and that it could cost £100. What's the script? Cheers. Si

A Front yes, rear no as it's a solid beam. Lowering a car will throw the geometry out so it's worth getting it readjusted. £100 seems a bit keen but if it's seized or needs lots of adjustment then it's possible. Worth it though, uneven tyre wear is expensive!

Q Hi. Can you tell me if the front bumper from a Corsa VXR would fit on to my Combo van and if not, what I would need to do to make it fit? Ant B

A The VXR was Corsa D based whereas the Combo was Corsa C based then Fiat whatever-it-is based. There was never a Corsa D based Combo so the answer is no and to make it fit would require a lot of effort. However anything is possible if you have the skills or the money.

Q Quick one but do you know where I could buy Corsa SRi M3 style mirrors? Crispin

A There are a few suppliers of the (cheap) replica items but for genuine ones, try your dealer, eBay or even the likes of German eBay for genuine Steinmetz items. Be warned though, they are rather expensive.

One other suggestion was the fuelling. A weak fuel pump or restrictions in the supply could give similar issues so if you can get one, hook up a fuel pressure gauge and go for a drive. With the vacuum pipe connected to the regulator, you should be getting around 2.5bar at idle and 3bar under load but just double check what management it has as there are very slight differences, but assuming it's not miles off then that's a fairly reasonable measure. Also check your coolant temperature readings... the sensors on engines of this era should be viewed as a consumable and one that's telling lies can create all manner of running issues. The only real pain is the car won't have the ability to display live data so it's back to the old school sadly – swap bits, get the multi-meter out and drink lots of tea whilst sucking your teeth and having a think. Hope you get it sorted.



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STAFF CARS

What we've done with our cars this month

THE TV FLEET/THIS ISSUE

DAN FURR CAVALIER TURBO 4X4

BOUGHT 2015

STATUS Yup, Mr Furr has more than one Vauxhall, check it out.



DAN FURR IRMSCHER MV6

BOUGHT 2014

STATUS Dan's 3.2-litre MV6 build gathers momentum, the end is in sight.



JAMIE CARLTON

BOUGHT 2012

STATUS Currently in Brighton while Jamie plans his next move.



DAVE CAVALIER TURBO

BOUGHT 2003

STATUS Despite grumbles to the contrary, we suspect Dave may soon sort his Cav...



This is far from Dan's first Cav – and until recently he had three 4x4 Turbos!



DAN FURR CAVALIER TURBO 4X4

NEW ADDITION

I've owned four Mk3 Cavaliers to date. In fact, until recently, I had three Cavalier Turbo 4x4s under lock and key! Add to that my role as administrator of the Mk3 Cavalier Owners Club, and it would be fair to say that I've got a lot of love for this classic Vauxhall.

I'm now down to two Turbo 4x4s following my recent decision to sell the 1993 Satin Red 'minter' that I'd owned since 2011. Parting with that car leaves me with a '92 Spectral Blue example and another Satin Red Turbo that currently wears an M-plate at each end.

The latter of the two remaining Cavaliers was bought with heavy modification in mind. In truth, I was afraid to detract from the '93 car's originality by toying with it too much, instead opting to restore and replace



Oh so 90's dials were fitted when Dan bought the car

its factory equipment with brand new genuine parts wherever possible. Reasoning that an additional Cavalier Turbo would enable me to tune to my heart's content, I decided to seek out another of these nineties powerhouses

of performance.

Already advertised at a low price, the second Satin Red car that would join my MV6 (at what increasingly looks like a Network Q dealership) is certainly not without its faults. A tired interior, a

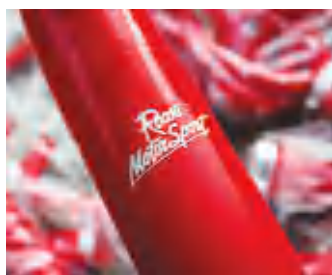
messy engine bay, rear quarter panel scratches, mismatched coil springs and a suspect turbocharger are all features that the seller described as 'adding character', although he came unstuck when trying to convince me that there was nothing wrong with the car's electrics – my Tech 1 diagnostic machine never lies! That'll be another £500 off the asking price, thanuverymuch.

A Cavalier Turbo in need of work was what I was looking for, and that's exactly what I've ended up with. Job done. Well, not quite. A series of vintage alarms appear to have been installed on the car over the years, leaving a mad mix of random wiring and additional dash lights dotted about its cabin. One of these security systems includes external proximity sensors

One of the plus points that came with the Cav



Yeah, that's not going to buff out!



Someone's going to be busy with all these Roose hoses!

that trigger warning messages from a loudspeaker if an unsuspecting pedestrian (or the car's new owner!) gets too close. This probably-advanced-for-its-time bit of kit allowed its installer to select any one of a number of languages for the pre-recorded messages, but today we found ourselves stuck in 'Spanish' mode. Yes, that's right – my car screams at me in Spanish if I stand too close to it. Needless to say, one of my first jobs is to rip out the old security gear and fit something sensible in its place!

Plus points include a decat Scorpion exhaust system, a custom headlining, low mileage and a recently rebuilt F28 gearbox. There's a dash that lights up like a Christmas tree too. Nice.

I've started stockpiling under-bonnet equipment already, and one of my first purchases includes a complete set of Roose Motorsport silicone hoses. Finished in bright red and supplied with polished chrome clips, these awesome ancillary, turbo, breather and coolant pipes will enhance the appearance of the car's engine bay while providing durability and a huge amount of heat resistance over the odd mix of hoses that the silicone parts find themselves replacing. I suppose I'd better get outside and fit 'em then, eh?!

THANKS

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It's the classic 'curates egg', good in parts, and Dan plans to sort the rest – with a twist!





DAN FURR **MV6**

MIX AND MATCH

I'm going to go out on a limb and make the argument that the

Monaro is essentially a high-powered Omega coupé (after all, the Aussie brute was based on the Omega's antipodean siblings, the Holden Commodore VT and VX). A similar train of thought led me to consider the possibility of fitting Monaro parts to my MV6, and it ultimately resulted in the purchase of Whiteline polyurethane front top mounts designed for the VXR edition Monaro and its successor, the utterly bonkers VXR8.

My pondering paid off – the brilliant black bushes are exactly the same shape and size as my car's factory top mounts. Hoorah! Whiteline claims that installing these performance parts improves the host vehicle's steering response and handling abilities under load, primarily thanks to top-notch build quality, a strengthened integrated bearing and polyurethane's resistance to fatigue. I look forward to putting the parts through their paces!

I promptly removed the MV6's Bilstein B8 Sprint shortened dampers

and Eibach Pro-Kit lowering springs in order to fit the seriously solid top mounts, and I took the opportunity to replace my car's tired top mount covers with freshly powdercoated parts at the same time. The sparkly silver stunners were intended for my Cavalier Turbo 4x4, but I was encouraged to make use of them sooner rather than later after noticing that GM had used the same factory parts on the Omega.

The Bilstein kit's nearby drop links had seen better days, and they certainly didn't want to budge without putting up a fight. This gave me all the excuse that I needed to free them with a hacksaw before contacting TFS Motorsport with a request for a pair of the firm's 'Aluminati' anodised adjustable drop links. These made-to-order components offer a 40mm adjustment range with a larger-than-OE uprated ball joint in a bronze housing designed for smooth, precise steering transition on lowered street or track cars. Hardened cap head bolts, anodised washers and Nylock nuts are also key features of these radiant red parts, and full adjustment can be



Astra GSI brake cooling ducts have been bolted to the wishbones



Dan can't wait to try these out, and who can blame him!





How long before it's on the road – place your bets now



Anodised adjustable drop links are very neat!

applied after fitting without the need for removal. Top banana!

Reassembling the B8s also allowed me to remove the car's new front wishbones and refit the Mk4 Astra GSi

brake cooling ducts that I attached to them a short while ago. I wasn't happy with the way that the Astra parts were sitting, resulting in a 12.5mm drill making its way through each wishbone

so that I could hold the ducts in place with heavy duty stainless bolts, washers and nylock nuts.

Finally, my recent spat of suspension fettling finished with the addition of

more polyurethane joy in the form of Powerflex exhaust mounts. Regular readers will recall seeing the rear end of my car already littered with these red bushes, but I noticed tired factory rubber located half way along the MV6's exhaust system while I was working underneath it. The reduction in pipework movement after fitting the Powerflex parts is extraordinary, so much so that I've decided to continue the theme of playing with polyurethane bushes and parts for V8-powered Vauxhalls by ordering a set of Pedders Monaro VXR rear subframe mounts and a matching set of rear offset camber reduction bushes. Bonza!

THANKS

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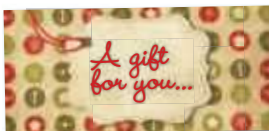
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MX15



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Want to see your car in PV? Well it just got even easier.

Simply take a nice, non-blurry, un-watermarked image that's reasonably large, then upload it to our Facebook page. We'll pick our favourites at the end of the month and print them next issue.

Please DO NOT send us photos via private message, we won't be able to repost them for you.

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Paul 'Jnr' Walker



Sam Mason



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Stefan Xristov



Barrie Humphries



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Christopher Hanselin



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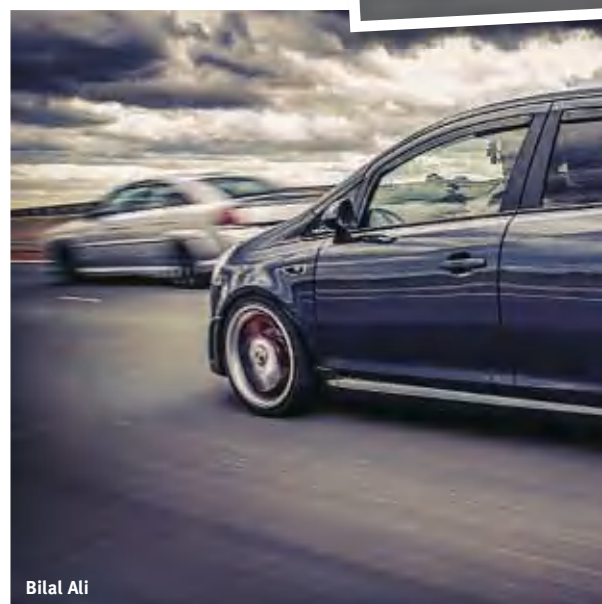
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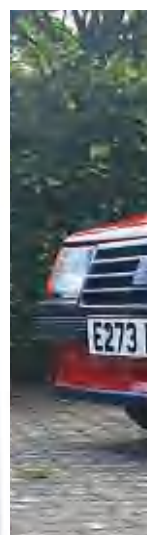
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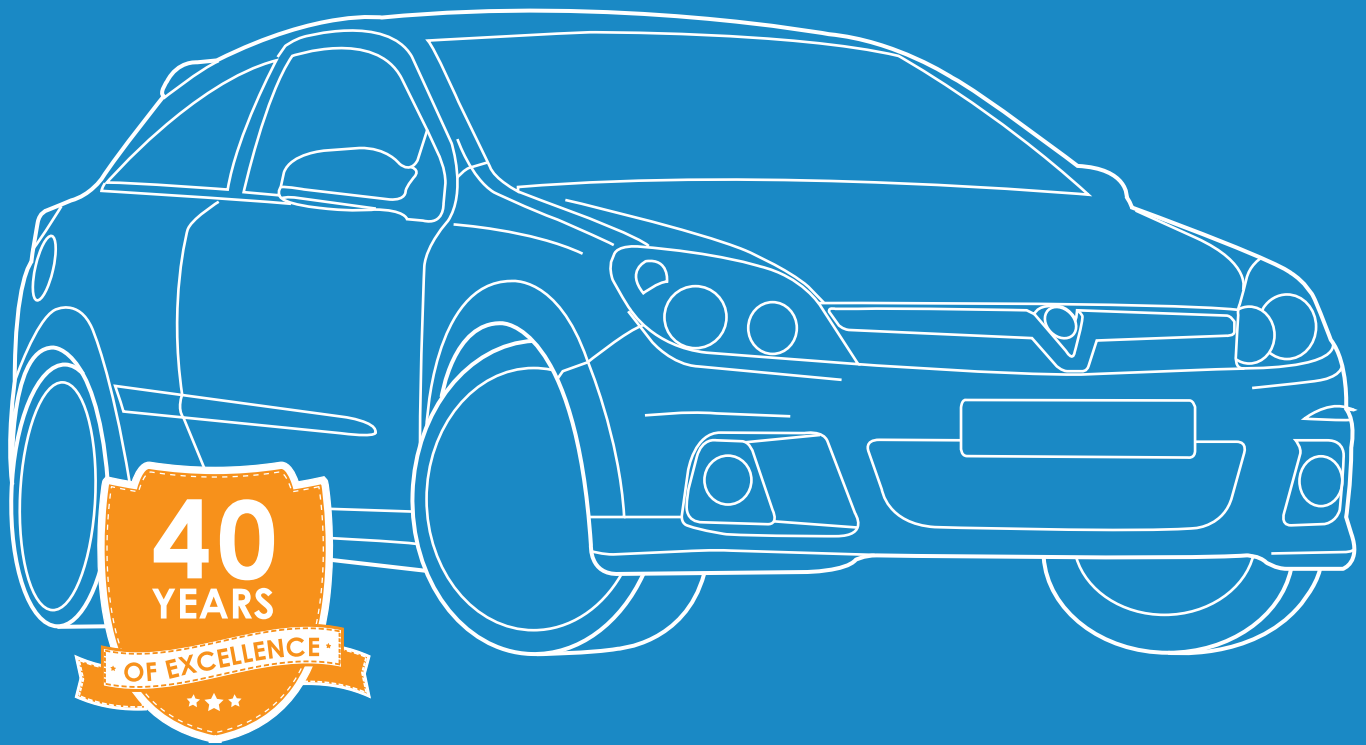


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- Telephone numbers starting '070' are usually from our affiliate website carandclassic.co.uk. If you get a message which says 'invalid' this usually means the item is no longer for sale.

**Astra****ASTRA**

£POA, Braking Vauxhall Astra bertone coupe 1.8 on a 2000 plate. It's the 1.8xe cable throttle. Good engine no leaks good oil pressure. Alloys with good tyres. The colour code z20h. Car is based in Manchester can post some parts and some collect. Has good exhaust system. Good body panels few small dings and scratches no rust. 07568 571997 (SN)

ASTRA

1990, £185, Starmist (MK 2) MoT Nov. C/L E/W. New sills, rear drums, slaves and shoes. Recently serviced (Inc cambelt). Only 11 left OTR. Reluctant sale. Essex. 01245 264327 (SN)

ASTRA

£3,300, 264 bhp. Normally aspirated. MSA Logbooked. Professionally built. Quaife LSD. Many spare tyres. Special brakes and steering. Bargain. Cost £30,000+ to build. Selling due to drivers old age. Highland. 07592 348110 (SN)

ASTRA 1.4 GLSI AUTO

1995, 19,000 miles, £995. Full service history (15 stamps) lots of maintenance receipts and old MoT's. 10 months MoT (no advisories) car drives as new, excellent original condition (no accidents, no rust, never been welded) interior like new. Needs to be seen. Cheshire. 07703 486396 (MC)

ASTRA CABRIOLET

1991, £700. MkII 1600 Cabriolet. MoT 2016. New exhaust, suspension mountings, 15" alloys, not been welded. Great driver, new roof in 2014, cost £500, bit of TLC. Towbar fitted. Lancashire. 01772 733148

ASTRA GTE

1987, 75,000 miles, £POA. The car is in immaculate condition inside and out looks like it has been pulled out the showroom from new. The car really does drive like new with no noises knocks or bumps and still pulls lovely. It has just had a full service including fan belt, water pump and cambelt kit so its ready to go. Bedfordshire. 07581 156182 (MC)

ASTRA GTE 16V

1991, 112,000 miles, £4,500. Silk violet gte 16v. It has escort cosworth seats fitted that do suit the car and are in very good condition - no tears and minimal wear. Arches / sills floors / bulk head are very good. Engine oil has been changed every thousand miles in my ownership and is always golden. Has a alloy twin core radiator recently fitted as the original broke. Yorkshire. 07871 547224 (HP)

ASTRA GTE 16V MK2

1990, 131,000 miles, £3,300 Offers invited. It has been fully rebuilt in the past, it is very clean, it has high mileage but for the age isn't bad at all, and has been very well looked after, this is seen by just looking through the receipts, there are very few marks in the paint and stonechips. Yorkshire. 07496 139484 (MC)

ASTRA GTE PICKUP RED TOP

1986, £6,295. Custom build in arden blue with contrasting blue and black interior and of course the all important digital dash. The car is in great shape outside, inside, underneath and under the hood. You could eat your dinner from the red top engine. Scotland. 07795 600983 (MC)

ASTRA SRI 190

95,000 miles, £3,100 ovno, 2 months MoT. Very clean, vxr seats front and rear, running 286 bhp with print out Koni adjustable suspension. Engine spec to much to list, cam eds inlet manifold hybrid k04 lightened flywheel loads, must be seen will be at trax. 07477 601769

Carlton**CARLTON**

1993, 126,000 miles, £3,650. Manual. 10 months MoT. Good solid tidy genuine car. Tidy Half black gsi leather interior. Analogue dash. Engine, gearbox and diff 100%. Recently serviced including new flywheel and clutch. Car drives perfectly. Stainless steel power flow exhaust. Car has new break pads, discs and hand break cables. Whole underside and wheel arches have been sealed and painted black. Northern Ireland. 07745 720367 (HP)

Cavalier**CAVALIER**

1985, £POA. These cars are very rare and much admired at car shows, looking for older classic, I like Morris M.O.S. in grey, car tested Feb 16, very nice car, hood needs repair. Lancashire. 07934 157700

CAVALIER

1986, £3,500. Excellent Condition. Restored in 2000 with one owner since. Sandblasted and resprayed Peugeot Flip Silver with single wiper conversion, sunk bonnet vents, rear spoiler, SRI 130 front, side and rear skirts Full 12 Months MOT. To much to mention. Northern Ireland. 07719 272186 (MC)

CAVALIER 1.8LS

1994, 75,000 miles, £995. Hatchback, last owner 19 years, always garaged, very very good throughout, full MoT. Cams. 07904 028763

CAVALIER COMMANDER

1986, 73,000 miles, £1,400. Silver. Current MoT. 1598cc petrol engine, Sun roof, always garaged and meticulously looked after. Regularly serviced and hardly used in recent years but still drives beautifully. Two owners only. Reasonable offers sought in region of £1400 - no time wasters please. Kent. 07733 196656 (HP)

CAVALIER CONVERTIBLE

1986, £POA. Owned since 1988. Regularly serviced. Very reliable, in good condition, but need welding repairs, bulkhead and inner wheel arches. Ideal project for enthusiast. A moderately rare car. Roof is perfect. Surrey. 01883 343483 (SN)

CAVALIER MK2

1987, 44,000 miles, £4,400. 5 door hatchback Cavalier SRI sunroof mode. Garaged from new and then dry stored in a heated barn from 2003 to 2014 then came out and had a full mechanical overhaul. Tape deck, genuine original GM floor mats, original dealer plates. No wear on the interior. No sagging of roof lining. Genuine buyers only please. Yorkshire. 07479 283307 (HP)

Chevette**CHEVETTE SPECIAL**

1980, 71,000 miles, £1,500. MoT 11 months, good condition, driven regularly, present owner 12 years, full service history plus some spares. South Yorks. 07752 189449

Corsa**CORSA**

2005, £1,295. Car van, rare future classic, diesel, MoT, 1500cc, low mileage, in good condition for year, 2 new tyres, p/steering, roof rack, CD player, radio/cassette, (new sat nav optionla), a bargain. Essex. 07926 117383

CORSA

2001, 50,044 miles, £1,650 Or near offer. 3 Door Comfort - Auto-14 Petrol - An Ideal 1st Car. MoT until May 2016 with NO advisories. This is a super little car which belongs to my wife. It starts on the button and is clean, smoke free, has no rust or corrosion and drives very well. Somerset. 07976 943857 (MC)

CORSA

1996, 71,100 miles, £1,500 ono. Rare opportunity to purchase a Corsa convertible. The car has been reliably used up to Aug this year. Upgrade suspension, alloy wheels, new roof. Hertfordshire. 07894 872376 (SN)

Cresta**CRESTA E SERIES**

1955, 55,000 miles, £15,750. Full car is in mint condition, its life from 1977 was in Portugal where it was a show car speedo. Original reg no UKD 920, only 4 owners 22672 cc, straight 6 cyl. Merseyside. 01514 267709 (SN)

PB

1964, 9,999 miles, £POA. Hydromatic complete. The body is gone, standing too long at the see. It has got 60s woolfrace wheels. On a Sorn. East Sussex. 01273 589835 (SN)



Nova

NOVA



1986, 41000 miles, £2,150. 1.2L 3 door hatch back. MoT March 2016, excellent condition throughout. Car has never been welded, no rot anywhere, battery, tray, boot floor, sills, chassis, legs, all perfect. Car comes with lots of documents from throughout the years and even original bill of sale. Good solid original car. Northern Ireland. 07763 764881 (HP)

Omega

OMEGA

2002, 93,000 miles, £400 ono. Manual, good runner, body & interior usual refinements, 600 miles since last MoT on Sorn. Denbighshire. 01745 332692

OMEGA

£340 ono. Estate Classic 2.5 cc, N reg, good project, very rare, excellent interior. 07417 434337 (SN)

OMEGA ESTATE



£400 ovno. Auto, M reg, needs restoring, ideal project, roof rack, alarm, alloyed wheels, good inside outside, future classic, must be towed away. Essex. 07926 117383

Vectra

VECTRA



1999, £800 ono. Excellent runner. GSI interior. Custom body kit. Cobra sport exhaust. Dual exit Pipercross Venom filter. Too many mods to mention them all. May sell parts separate. MoT November. Northumberland. 07707 975210 (PB)

VECTRA 2.6 GSI

£Offers invited. 4 door saloon. Black, low mileage. Excellent condition. New tyres. Completely standard. Beautiful car. Very rare. Owned last 6 years. Shropshire. 07582 885159 (RB)

Viscount

CRESTA



1969, 40,000 miles, £7,000. Burgundy with a Pageant Red coach line. 60s & 70s Fords are my thing so I have reluctantly decided to sell the Viscount. MoT & Taxed until August 2016. Power steering, 4 electric windows, 2 speed powerglide auto gear box. Well presented car and drives like a dream. Tyne And Wear. 07899 957403 (HP)

Viva

VIVA ESTATE



1974, 45,000 miles, £2,800 or near offer. MoT 28th June 2016, Tax exempt. very good condition, body and paint very good, interior very good, runs and drives great, restyle wheels and tyres in good order, twin weber carb and manifold fitted, centre back stainless exhaust. Very rare car now and ready to drive and enjoy. Any questions phone. Cheshire. 07958 598167 (HP)

Wyvern

WYVERN

1953, £3,800. Tax and MoT exempt, running restoration, good condition, needs minor work to complete. Middlesex. 01895 237820

VEHICLES WANTED

ALL VAUXHALL BRAVA TRUCKS AND ISUZU TRUCKS



Wanted. Any year clean or rusty we are very good buyers. (T). 07775 998628 (JW)

CLASSIC CARS

1930, Wanted. Old classic car wanted in any condition. West Midlands. West Midlands. 07858 705005 (RB)

FORD SIERRA

Wanted. Diesel or Ford Granada, diesel or Vauxhall Victor F-type. Herefordshire. 07528 642560 (PB)

OPEL MANTA COUPE

Wanted. Or Opel Ascona. Anything Considered. Cash Waiting. 07901 993292 (MC)

VAUXHALL VICTOR

Wanted, Wanted F type or Vauxhall Cresta PA or Austin A55 pick-up or van. Herefordshire. 07528 642560 (PB)

PARTS FOR SALE

CORSA EXHAUST

£60. Sports model, new, no back box, will fit Corsa 1993 up to 1999, £60. Also back box for Astra 1990, new, £25. West Midlands. 01543 378719

DYNAMICS ALLOY WHEELS X4



£250. To fit Mini (pre 2015). Vauxhall Corsa. Renault Clio. Ford Fiesta. 4 stud Honda or 4 stud Rover. Leicestershire. 01530 231975

FORD SIERRA TYPE 9

£285. Gearbox, 5 speed. Suitable for many sports and saloon car conversions. Lothian. 01313 432574 (RB)

VARIOUS

£POA. Acclaim O/S/R door VG. Beetle engine cover (late). 3 Vauxhall Nova wheels and tyres, unused. Bedfordshire. 01234 213871 (RB)

VAUXHALL CAVALIER



1970s, £30 plus p&p. Electric retractable ariel. Brand new. 07831 748762 (SN)

VAUXHALL CORSA

£POA. 2007 onwards, tailgate spoiler with brake light- please call with offers. Bristol. 07502 032532 (JW)

VAUXHALL VIVA HC

£POA. 1x engine 1256cc from 1974. 42,000 miles. £65 ono. 1x gearbox £35 ono. 1x front windscreen £30. 1x front grille £18 ono. Glasgow. 07939 699201 (PB)

VAUXHALL VX490

£70 the pair. Pair of carburettors on manifold. Complete ready to fit. Very good condition. West Midlands. 07961 909983 (PB)

WHEELS



£195. Set of four Astra Coupe turbo alloys with tyres. 215/40/17 good condition. Manchester. 07886 625191 (SN)

PARTS WANTED

FORD FIESTA MK3 SEATS

Wanted. Consider complete car if it is automatic, not too far from London. London. 02083 613711 / 07770 119915 (RB)

REAR AXLE FOR A VAUXHALL VISCOUNT

Wanted. In good condition, Isle of Man. 07624 451359

MISCELLANEOUS

12 VOLT WINCH



£50. Phantom 2500kg pull winch, complete as new, with instructions and accessories. Staffordshire. 01543 418993 (RB)

3 GARGOYLE MOBIL OIL SIGNS



£60 the lot. Enamel, steel Mobilgas gargoyle, vacuum oil company. Surrey. 07534 431198 (RB)

858101

£Serious offers over £3,750. Private registration plate on Nissan Primera. South Yorkshire. 07970 782251 (RB)

BADGE



£95. AA enamel sign (not tin) 8 inch dia 2 fixing holes as in AA vehicles. No damage. Post free. Surrey. 07534 431198 (SN)

BANTAM CAR TRAILER

£995 ono. Bed length 3m, bed width 1.7m. Load capacity 1 ton. Winch hitch lock. Auto reverse system. Good condition. Cheshire. 07796 094894 (RB)

BROOKLANDS FLYING CLUB BADGE



£65. Mnf by Toye Kenning & Spencer, excellent condition. Essex. 07964 486932

BSA D1

1963, £3,000. Genuine rare! Telegram boys Royal Mail motorcycle. Post Office red. 125cc. Stunning nut and bolt restoration. Show use. All rare G.P.O. fittings and pouch. History, photo file. Mint condition. New everything?. Avon. 07840 400569 (RB)

BUGATTI BADGE AND 3 RACE BOOKS



£48 the lot. Lewes, 1935; Prescote, 1964; 39th National Rally. Surrey. 020 8399 7541 (RB)

CAR TRANSPORTER TRAILER

£995 ovno. Car/van/4x4 (or even caravan). 16ft x 6ft bed (overall 21ft x 7ft 6in). Heavy duty, twin axle, ramps, winch (manual), lights, socket, new brakes/tyres, JCB enamel paint. Tows well. Derbyshire. 07474 948711 (RB)

CARAVAN

2002, £1750 ono. Freedom, Microlite, Discovery, L.E. 2 berth. Length 9ft 3in. Pop up roof, cassette toilet, cooker, fridge, hot water heater, awning, sun canopy. All in excellent condition with lots of extras. Easily towed with classic car. Renfrewshire. 01505 324503 (RB)

CARAVAN AWNING

£300. Dorema. Suitable for 16ft-17ft caravan. Nearly new. V.G. condition. Size 10, red/grey colour, 875-900cms, brand new poles included. Free delivery. Dorset. 07971 385242 (RB)

PERFORMANCE

VAUXHALL NEXT ISSUE...

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**JANUARY
15TH**

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MINTY STUNNER
ON ITBS



ARTY ASTRA

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★ DRIFTLAND HI-JINKS ★ BIG POWER
CHEVETTE ★ DYNO DAY
PLUS LOADS MORE...

All information correct at time of going to press, but Jarkle is worse for wear after falling down the stairs carrying a vacuum (this really happened). He tripped, slipped and the hose went up his bumhole! (This may not have happened)



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